6: Stübel E-5 (1936) 1954 AE3 Sino-Tibetan Border Peoples AE3
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H. Stübel

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THE MEWU FANTZU OF CH'INGHAI
(Die Mewu Fan-tse von Ch'inghai)

(an unpublished manuscript, 1954)

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PREFACE

The present account is based on notes which I took on a journey through Kansu in the summer and fall of 1936. The purpose of my trip was to become better acquainted with a Tibetan nomad tribe. Unfortunately, difficulties arose on the trip which I could not foresee. I was obliged to break off my work prematurely, for while I was in the Tibetan grasslands Mao Tse-tung's army invaded southern Kansu on its famous great march to the North. (1) I was in danger of 114

1. from Kiangsi through South China to Yünnan, thence through the western border region of China to Kansu, and finally to Yen-an in Shensi.

being cut off from the capital, Lanchow. This march to the north was a portent of the troubled times which began with the Sino-Japanese War and which were followed by the Second World War and the Communist revolution in China. In the tumult of this period I lost first my ethnological collection in China, which I had gathered on the trip, and in the end also a large amount of photographic material that I had accumulated. Thus the illustrations which I planned as an essential part of this work are lacking, and without the objects I collected it was impossible for me to give as detailed an account as I should have liked of the material culture of the tribe I visited. I therefore wish to refer the reader first of all to the illustrations and the excellent brief description which W. W. Rockhill (2) has given

2. Rockhill 1).

of his collection in the US National Museum in Washington. For the landscape the best illustrations are found in A. Tafel's (3) book on

3. Tafel 2).

his Tibetan journey, and for ethnic types and folk costumes the reader is referred primarily to the illustrations of M. Hermanns. (1)

1. Hermanns 3).

/2/ In the meantime our knowledge of the nomads of northeastern Tibet (or Kansu) has increased tremendously. In this

114 connection I should like to mention above all the comprehensive work of Father M. Hermanns (2): Die Nomaden von Tibet, and the

2. Hermanns 3).

excellent portrayal by R. B. Ekvall (3) of the sociological and eco-

3. Ekvall 4).

nomic conditions of the region I visited. The book by Hermanns gives a wide survey of the culture of the Tibetan nomads; the work by Ekvall is rich in factual material and discusses the cultural relationships between Chinese, Mohammedans, and sedentary and nomadic Tibetans. This is extremely interesting for the ethno-sociologist.

The authors of these two books had the advantage of living for many years among the Tibetans and of speaking their language. I can present only a modest supplement to their work by setting forth
124 my observations of a single tent camp. Besides my assistant Mr. Wu Hsin-wei, an experienced ethnological field worker, I was fortunate enough to have as traveling companions an excellent interpreter for Tibetan and a reliable Tibetan stableman who spoke Chinese. My interpreter was a Chinese trader who lived in He-tso, the Chinese and Mohammedan settlement of some size nearest the area I visited. As a young man he had been forced into the region of the Tibetan nomads, following a Mohammedan uprising, and he lived and traded among these people for many years. He was particularly friendly with a few of the Tibetans in the camp I visited. He was a keen observer and was apparently himself interested in the life of the nomads. He was always willing to answer my questions as objectively as was possible for a simple trader, to arrange introductions /2a/ with Tibetan informants, and to interpret patiently.

133 The landscape and climate of the Tibetan steppes have often been depicted by more competent persons, so that a description will not be necessary. For the author, the weeks he spent in a small tent adjoining the camp of the Mewu-Fantzu were not only a period of ethnological field work, but also an inspiring experience of nature. In the height of summer the steppe is a gay carpet of flowers, especially edelweiss, luminous blue gentian, yellow and red pedicularis. On the heights between the shallow, narrow valleys there is a limitless vista on all sides, when it is not broken by individual steep, light-colored limestone massifs rising up more than 5,000 meters, their peaks often covered with freshly fallen

snow. Toward the south, the horizon is blocked by mighty Min-shan, 133
a chain of Matterhorns with peaks almost 6,000 meters high, with glaciers and the imposing notch of the "Stone Gate" (Shih-men) which leads over into Szechuan. There are memories of distant rides on 136
horseback, of meditative walks beneath the deep blue sky of the alps; or of dark, storm-driven rain clouds in the solemn peace of the highlands, the quiet broken only by the song of the lark, the shrill cry of the falcon or the deep croak of the raven and the lively whistle of the ground hog. The vast steppe, utterly deserted by man, is animated now and then by herds of gazelles, a few hovering vultures or eagles high in the heavens. Or one sees a narrow valley with a row of black tents and groups of horsemen, dotted with black yak and white sheep herds, the whole strangely enlivened by the low barking of dogs and the bleating of yaks and sheep.

/3/ In earlier times Tibetan tribes were scattered far beyond the 177
borders of present-day Tibet toward the west, as far as the provinces of Szechuan and Kansu, probably even throughout Shensi to Honan. Even today there are Tibetan tribes in Szechuan and Kansu, but culturally they have been more strongly influenced by the Chinese, often having also adopted the Chinese language. Here we find all kinds of transitions between nearly pure Tibetans and those that have been almost completely assimilated by the Chinese. In the course 167
of the last 100 years the boundary between the provinces of Szechuan and Kansu on the one hand and Western Tibet, that is to say, the present outlying Chinese provinces of Hsik'ang and Ch'inghai (Kokonor), on the other, has been shifted several times. In Kansu the Chinese government was impelled to do this because of the gradual advance of the Chinese toward the West, and also because of difficult relationships with a third, very restless element of the population of Kansu, the Mohammedans. Although the latter have adopted the Chinese language, dress and customs, they have by no means been assimilated by the Chinese, but are consciously opposed to them. Anthropologically they can be included among the Turkish peoples of Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang). The Chinese and Mohammedan 311
settlements in Kansu have pushed on as far as the Chinese farmer has found proper conditions - especially on loess soil - for the type of agriculture he has practised since ancient times. In places where the bottom of the valley lends itself to irrigation, the river valleys have become rich oases with luxuriant vegetable and fruit cultures

311 in between the dry, treeless mountains. But the mountainous country, too, can feed the tough and industrious population of Chinese and Mohammedan farmers, provided there are /4/ peaceful political conditions and a settled administration, although naturally these highlands (1500 - 3000 meters) cannot be nearly as densely populated as the lower, warmer loess regions of central and eastern North China.

133 177 South of the loess country in Kansu the boundary toward Szechuan is formed by a mighty mountain range over 5,000 meters high, a part of the K'un-lun system. From the north, only unimportant branches of Chinese culture have penetrated into these mountains, since here the conditions necessary for Chinese agriculture are lacking. Neither the narrow valleys that have eaten into limestone, primary rock or granite, nor the undulating uplands more than 3,000 [361] meters high are suitable for the Chinese farmer. Sedentary Tibetans or Fantzu (following the Kansu colloquial usage, we shall subsequently refer to the "Tibetans" as "Fantzu") live in the valleys and in the [241] lower parts of the highland. Even though the summers here are short, crops of Tibetan barley (ch'ing-ku), peas and rape are relatively good. Thus they are able to provide themselves as well as the nomad tribes 231 living still higher up, with the indispensable barley flour. But these Sedentary Fantzu lead a somewhat different life from the Chinese farmer, for besides cultivating their fields, they also raise animals. The yak serves them as mount and beast of burden and gives them milk and butter, which makes them less dependent on crops in bad years, and provides them with an inestimable source of health and energy in this cold mountain climate.

133 361 You are struck by these conditions if you travel from the provincial capital of Lanchow south through the district of Ho-chou (modern name Lin-hsia) to the famous Labrang monastery which is south of the /5/ loess region in the mountains. You reach the valley of the T'ao-ho from the Huang-ho Valley by traveling through a loess region inhabited mainly by Mohammedans, and through a sparsely settled granite mountain range with a crest not quite 3,000 meters high. South of the T'ao-ho is a deeply furrowed loess landscape that reaches almost 3,000 meters. This is bounded on the other side by the Hsia-ho, and is inhabited by Mohammedans. In the Hsia-ho Valley the percentage of Chinese is again larger, but Mohammedanism has made more and more headway in the course of the last 30 years, partly after very bloody insurrections which were difficult to suppress. This is probably the main reason why the Chinese government has shifted the boundary between Kansu and Ch'inghai farther west.

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631 About one kilometer down the valley from this monastery city, a
443 small market town arose, inhabited mainly by Mohammedans. Nine
years ago the Chinese government made this the capital of the dis-
241 trict of Hsia-ho. Li An-che 5) gives a detailed description of Labrang.
231 /7/ The Tibetans who live around Labrang are farmers. They grow Tibetan barley in the Hsia-ho Valley and its lateral valleys. If conditions are favorable, they also plant some wheat, as well as oats, peas, broad beans, rape and flax. They also raise yaks, sheep, goats, horses and pigs.

133 Not far south of Labrang the region of the high Tibetan steppe begins. Its southern boundary toward Hsik'ang and Szechuan is formed by the mighty Min-shan, a portion of the K'un-lun system. West of Labrang are the highlands of the Ch'inghai Province (Kokonor).

133 Above 3,000 meters vegetation gradually comes to an end, not,
241 however, peasant settlements. Even in the treeless, flat, trough-
231 shaped high valleys between 3,000 and 3,500 meters there are every-
361 where small villages of sedentary Tibetans. Here they grow Tibetan barley and oats, often the two crops mixed, as well as rape. With increasing altitude, cultivation gradually grows less, and from about 3,500 meters upward we find grassland inhabited only by stock farmers. (1)

1. Cf. Ekvall 4), page 29.

177 Although the Tibetans who live here are under Chinese administration, they are nevertheless very independent of the Chinese, and are not very much influenced by Chinese culture. They are divided into individual tribes, one of which (the Mewu-Fantzu) we shall describe more closely in the following account.

131 The territory of the Mewu-Fantzu lies south of the large lamasery of He-tso (2) and east of the "old" city of T'ao-chou. The tribe

2. Tafel 2) Vol. II gives a good illustration of the He-tso monastery.

of the Mewu-Fantzu consists of sedentary as well as nomadic Tibetans. /8/

123 After I had lived in Labrang and He-tso for some time, I visited two monasteries belonging to the Mewu tribe: the old and the new Mewu monasteries (Mewu-chiu-szu and Mewu-hsin-szu). Then I pitched my tent 18 or 20 kilometers south of the latter monastery in a shallow valley of about 3,950 meters elevation. On the slope

mewu

If you travel from Ho-chou up the wide, fertile valley of the 133
Hsia-ho which cuts in between loess plateaus, you soon come to 131
steep wooded mountains that are set off sharply from the loess country. The Hsia-ho breaks through these mountains in a narrow ravine, and leaves them behind at T'u-men-kuan. This is the present boundary between the district of Ho-chou and the recently demarcated district of Hsia-ho, which formerly belonged to the Tibetan province of Amdo. This district boundary, which is at the same time actually the boundary between loess country and rock mountains, has long formed an ethnic division between Chinese and Tibetans. The valley at Tu-men-kuan is closed off by an old wall, which may often have been the chief line of defense of the Chinese against an enemy breaking through from the high mountains. When I traveled through here at the end of August 1936, this barrier was occupied by a Mohammedan posse which aimed at defending it against the Communist army of Mao Tse-tung coming from Szechuan on its march to the north. However, the Communists did not advance toward Kansu through the Hsia-ho Valley, but /6/ proceeded farther east, because they were not equipped for the march through the Tibetan highlands which was to have led them to Sinkiang. They would have found the Mohammedans tough opponents, prepared to resist them with determination, although the weapons of this posse consisted almost entirely of spears decorated with red tassels.

Beyond Tu-men-kuan the Chinese and Mohammedans settle 563
only in the principal valleys, and even there almost exclusively as 463
traders who build small settlements along the caravan roads. They 361
supply passing travelers and caravan drivers with food and shelter, sell all kinds of objects of daily use to the Tibetan country people, and for their part buy up farm products. For the rest, however, the region beyond Tu-men-kuan is settled mainly by Tibetans who have preserved their Tibetan culture relatively intact. A few kilometers up the valley we come upon the first Tibetan chorten and directly after that we pass the first lamasery. Two-days' journey above Tu-men-kuan, near the place where the Hsia-ho, rising in the undulating highland farther south, begins gnawing its way into the mountains, lies Labrang at an altitude of 2,950 meters.

The famous monastery of Labrang is a most important cultural 792
and political center. It was founded in the 18th century during the reign of Ch'ien-lung who was interested in furthering Lamaistic religion. Labrang is now an important monastery city with many magnificent temples and countless courts for the lamas. There are said to be around 3,000 lamas and "living Buddhas" residing here.

Mewu

of this valley trough there stood 23 black Tibetan tents in a long row. /23
I had good introductions from the new Mewu monastery, as well as a Chinese interpreter who had lived many years as a trader among these Tibetans, so that I soon gained somewhat closer contact with the inhabitants of these tents. (3)

3. For the place of these traders in the social life of the Tibetan nomads, see Ekvall 4), page 48ff.

Anthropologically the Mewu-Fantzu are by no means a uniform /42
type. On the contrary, one is struck by the diversity of types. (1)

1. In this connection, compare the rich selection of illustrations of ethnic types in Hermanns 3). According to Ekvall 4), page 9, the Fantzu of this region have "all characteristics of a mongrel physical type."

The men are tall to medium-height, measuring about 160 to 180 centimeters; the women are on the average about 20 centimeters shorter. The skin of the exposed parts of their bodies is dark brown, their hair is deep black. Their beard and arm-pit hair is sparse. They do not always have pronounced Mongoloid lids. Some of these Tibetans with their relatively long faces, slightly slanting eyes, somewhat prominent cheek bones and long, flat to concave noses, cannot be distinguished from typical North Chinese. Others, with rounder, flatter faces, more prominent cheek bones, concave noses and slanting eyes with very pronounced Mongoloid folds, look more like Mongolians. Still other types with squarer faces, prominent cheek bones and more prominent, rather narrow upper jaws, sometimes remind one of a Japanese type. However, one also sees types that resemble more the Turkish inhabitants of Sinkiang or even Europeans, more often with straight noses (especially in the types /9/ resembling Europeans), less prominent cheek bones, straight eyes with eyebrows slanting downward at the outer edge, without the Mongoloid fold. By contrast there are, however, also types which occur more often farther south in Hsik'ang, according to my observation, who have very prominent aquiline noses and high cheek bones and remind one of the North American Indian type with their aquiline noses. There are others with narrow faces, delicate aquiline noses and graceful bodies, resembling East Indians and gypsies. All this simply shows that these Fantzu are not a uniform race, and that there must have been a great deal of miscegenation.

164 The Tibetans are a very strong race of men; I did not see a single asthenic type among the Mewsu-Fantzu. Their health, apart from infectious diseases, is good. The most frequent complaints of patients who came to me were of rheumatism and stomach disorders. The latter often seemed to indicate chronic catarrh of the stomach and also stomach ulcers. There is a very frequent incidence of conjunctivitis, probably often trachoma. Smallpox is very prominent among the infectious diseases, and syphilis among the chronic ones. I did not observe any cases of tuberculosis, but there is leprosy, infrequent, in spite of the fact that lepers are not segregated. All the more ravaging are the effects of syphilis which here goes hand in hand with deterioration of the skin, mucous membranes and bones.

164 853 Infant mortality is extraordinarily high. Most families have only one or two children, although women often give birth to as many as ten. The reason for this may be in the strange way babies are fed. People prefer to give their children yak milk rather than mother's milk, because they say mother's milk makes them stupid. Although yak milk is richer than cow's milk, the children get the boiled milk undiluted, /10/ often with added butter and roasted barley flour (tsamba).

Men's Dress

291 We shall touch only briefly on the dress (1) of the Mewu-Fantzu

1. Compare Rockhill 1), page 684 ff. His illustrations and descriptions give a good general idea, although they are not specifically of the Mewu-Fantzu, and despite the fact that each tribe has definite characteristics of costume, ornament and hair style.

because it is the common dress of Tibetans in general. The chief article of clothing is a large sheep fur. It has very long sleeves that extend far over the hands. They prefer to put only their left arm into the sleeve and leave the right arm and shoulder free. The fur of the nomads is usually bordered at the neck with a band of leopard skin about 10 centimeters wide. The coat has a hem at the bottom of black woolen material. Poor people omit the leopard skin trimming or replace it with a border of pulu. This is a Tibetan woolen material. It is not made by the western Tibetans themselves, but is imported from the highlands of Inner Tibet. The leopard skin trimming is obtained ready-made from Chinese traders; the grassland

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itself does not supply enough skins for this purpose. Most of the 291
leopard skins come from the forest regions of the Min-shan, where they are sold to Chinese traders by the Fantzu who live there. Ordinarily the Fantzu wear extremely dirty furs, especially in summer, because during the warm season they prefer worn skins with shorter hair. In winter and on festive occasions they sometimes also wear a jacket under the fur. This may be of silk, pulu or simple Chinese cotton, depending on the wealth of the wearer. This jacket /11/ is cut in the old Chinese style with a side closing trimmed with a colored band about 3 centimeters wide. It has a high stand-up cloth collar different in color on the inside and outside, for example, red inside and green outside. The color combination of the jacket (collar and bottom hem) can vary a great deal. In former times no pants were worn in summer, but gradually the men are getting used to the Chinese trousers made of thin dark-blue cotton. In winter they wear trousers of fleece or perhaps only leggings, just like the Northern Chinese. The fur is worn inside on the bare skin and they wear no drawers. In winter and on festive occasions a coat of pulu or silk (tuan, satin) is worn over the fur. The color of this coat varies and may be purple, blue, red, green or black, but not white. The lower part of this coat is sewn with several gay borders of varicolored silk, to give the impression of many coats, one on top of the other. In rainy weather coats of white wool with long sleeves are worn, less frequently capes of the same material. The woolen coat, like the one of fur, is not fastened with buttons but simply tied together over the hips. Ordinarily a coarse rope of braided yak hair is used for this purpose, but festive garb requires a red sash of Szechuan silk. All articles of clothing are made by the men, not the women. The men can also make Chinese trousers themselves. Boys' clothing is the same as men's.

Their shoes (1) are made of a leather foot, and a leg that may be 292

1. Rockhill 1), Plate 2.

made of pulu or simple wool. The foot part is often only a very simple piece of white yak leather cut to size and then turned up all around, very much like the Indian mocassin or the opanke of the Balkan peoples. The leg shaft is set onto this foot part and reaches to the /12/ knees. The favorite material is red Russia leather imported from the Chinese in Kalgan, or bright-colored pulu cloth with a pattern in the form of a cross.

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292 Many different kinds of head coverings (2) are worn. The most

2. Rockhill 1), Plate 4.

popular is a round fur cap with a tassel of cloth usually dyed red. They prefer fox fur; sheepskin caps are cheaper. For the latter the fur of lambs one month old is used. The fur cap is indispensable for the festive costume. In summer it is often replaced by headgear consisting of a strip of gaily colored pulu cloth, usually yellow and blue striped. Felt hats are also worn, either a simple, cone-shaped hat without brim, made of thick, soft, unbleached sheep wool felt, or a hat of stiff sheep wool felt in the form of a truncated cone, with a wide flat brim.

Women's Dress

291 Women's dress is even less influenced by the Chinese than men's. In summer it usually consists of a sheep fur; in winter a coat is worn over this. The fur is cut like that of the men, and is likewise held together by a coarse cord around the hips. In summer the women like to work with the upper part of their body free, so they slip out of the fur and let it hang down over the cord. The women's fur is distinguished from the men's in that it has only a cloth band around the neck, never a leopard skin; on the other hand, the lower hem of the women's fur is trimmed with a wide, gaily colored band of cotton, or, in the case of wealthy women, of silk. The women do not wear trousers. When it rains the women wear woolen cloaks or more often woolen pelerines closed in front, with a hole for /13/ the head, like the South American poncho. The pelerines often have a pointed hood. In the summer women wear worn-out furs with short hair; in the winter, newer ones with long hair and over them a pulu coat. Festive dress does not differ much from everyday garb, except that the clothes are new and that a colored coat of cloth or silk is worn over the fur coat.

292 At work and around the house the women go barefoot in summer. For the rest they wear the same kind of high boots as the men. Only elegant women are seen wearing Chinese shoes on festive occasions. The women do not wear pulu caps. In the rain they wear the same soft felt hats that the men wear when they go out to the pastures. A stiff felt hat is part of the festive garb of the women. It has the same truncated cone shape as that of the men, but the cone is smaller in diameter and thus looks more elegant. On top the hat has a copper

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ornament and a silk tassel. (1) Their jewelry they buy from the 292

1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 33, 34.

Chinese.

Hair Style

The Fantzu wear their hair cut short; it is only at the parting 302 that many men still wear a small, thin braid that looks like a rat tail. Their method of cutting hair is still very primitive. They use an old sickle that is no longer good for cutting grass, and they sharpen it after a fashion on suitable stones found in the field. In contrast to the Chinese, the Fantzu, oddly enough, cut their hair from the top down. Only the sorcerers (bön-bu) wear long hair, which they wrap in a head scarf. Their beards they pluck out, like the Chinese, with brass tweezers which they carry on their rosaries or on a chain around their necks. Only lamas occasionally wear beards. /14/

The women wear a very complicated coiffure. Little girls of six or seven have their hair dressed for the first time. The style consists of three rather thick braids that hang down from the parting and many smaller, thin braids on the sides, held together above the ears with a special ornament. The coiffure of the women is the same, except that they wear many more braids that hang far down and are held together with a complicated ornament. (1) Beside the two

1. A similar ornament of another nomad tribe is shown in Hermanns 3), illustration 51.

center braids, the woman wears 80 to 100 thin braids on either side. These braids must reach to the knees. Since a woman's hair is often not long enough or thick enough for this type of coiffure, she buys switches from Chinese traders.

For the rest, the Tibetans do not know very much about caring 515 for their bodies. They do not wash, and their bodies are covered with a black film of dirt. Since they also do not wash their furs, conditions are ideal for the propagation of body lice. The Fantzu wash only their mouth, face and hands, with cold water. They do not use a wash basin for this, but take a mouthful of water from a pottery jug, rinse out their mouths, then spit out the water into their hands and use it to wash their face and hands. After washing, they rub butter into their face. After eating, too, if they have

515 remnants of butter on their fingers, they rub it into their faces, and it forms a protection against the strong mountain sun.

Ornaments and Weapons

301 Men and women lay much more stress on ornament than on bodily hygiene. The men wear one earring (1), either on the right or the

1. Rockhill 1), Plate 6.

left ear. It is made of silver and is usually set with a large red coral. The tent nomads also /15/ occasionally wear a large, ring-shaped ornament of silver set with corals, above one ear. This is not, however, characteristic of their costume, but belongs to the sedentary Fantzu who live farther south in the region of Labrang. Less frequently the men wear simple silver finger rings as earrings. A rosary is
788
301 usually worn around the neck as a chain. It is made of thick black disks of fragrant wood, or, what is simpler and cheaper, of small wooden beads. Sometimes they also wear their rosary (2) at their

2. Rockhill 1), Plates 35, 36.

belt or on the rope around their hips. The black chain around their necks is called tsä-nga in Tibetan, or su-chu in Chinese. On this chain hangs in front either a round disk resembling a Chinese chess figure or a large round amber or lacquered ball. On their thin rosaries they wear a square or circular silver box containing some kind of sacred relics, mostly pieces of cloth, amulets and often a Buddha picture, usually that of the Dalai-Lama or the Panchan-Lama. (3). The front of this box is always decorated with a coral

3. Rockhill 1), Plate 5.

in the center. The length of the sides or the diameter of this small amulet box can vary a great deal, but averages about 6 to 9 centimeters and 4 to 6 centimeters respectively. It is about 1 to 2 centimeters deep.

411 Apart from these actual ornaments, however, the men set great store by the decoration of their weapons. They always carry their weapons with them when they go any distance from their tents, even in peaceful times. Their weapons consist of a gun, a sword and a dagger. Until recently old-fashioned guns (1) were generally used,

1. Rockhill 1), Plate 23.

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with the customary fork and with a stock that often has a beautiful 411
silver mounting. These old-fashioned guns are still being made in Ho-chou. Within the last four years, however, many comparatively modern guns have been sold to the Fantzu by escaped Chinese soldiers who were racked with hunger. /16/ These modern weapons often still have forks which are chiefly made in Labrang.

Their swords (2) are about one meter long. They are not worn

2. Rockhill, Plate 22.

on a sword belt, but are stuck through the belt or the hip cord in front, so that they rest almost horizontally. The haft and scabbard are usually richly decorated with silver mountings set with corals.

A knife about 30 centimeters long hangs at their side, its handle and sheath consisting of brass or silver.

The women wear large silver ear pendants, richly set with corals 301
and turquoises. Little girls at the age of 7 or 8 get their first ear- 302
rings, mostly of simple brass. Finger rings (3) of silver or copper,

3. Rockhill, Plate 5.

also set with corals and turquoises, are worn on the left hand. Neck rings or necklaces are not worn. Special emphasis is put on hair ornaments. When the young girls get their first hairdo, the side braids are, as we have said, held together by a special ornament. This consists of cloth which the women themselves sew and trim with corals. (4)

4. For a description of women's hairdo compare Rockhill, page 690.

An important tool of the women, which has at the same time 301
developed into an ornament, is an anchor-shaped double hook of 234
brass, known in Tibetan as sao-sou (Chinese: nai-k'o, "milking 413
hook"). (1) It is usually set with a few corals. It is always worn

1. Illustrated in Futterer 6), Vol. I, page 34.

at the belt and is used by the women to hold the pail when milking. Sometimes their belt or hip cord is also ornamented with strips of red cloth and tassels.

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301 The Tibetans spend relatively much money on their ornaments.
435 I quote the following prices: silver earrings for a man: $2 - $3 (at the time /17/ of my visit the Chinese silver dollar was the equivalent of US $0.50; the Chinese paper money which even at that time had a considerably lower rate of exchange, was not accepted by the tent nomads), corals for these: $2 - $3; finger rings: one-half dollar. The heavy rosaries of fragrant wood with pendant cost from $4 to several hundred dollars, the thin ones: $1 - $3. The small silver boxes attached to the rosaries and worn on the chest cost $10 - $15; an additional $1 - $2 is spent for the coral in the center. Simple old-fashioned guns cost only $10, but the Fantzu pay $200 - $300 for good modern ones. Swords cost $2 - $40, depending on their decoration and the amount of silver and coral used. The women's earrings cost $4 - $15, while the brass earrings of the young girls cost no more than $1. The hair ornaments of the girls costs $0.50, those of the women $10 to $100, depending on the amount of coral and whether they are made of silver or brass. Women's silver finger rings without corals or stones cost $1 - $2. The brass mounting on a hat costs 20 - 30 cents. The milking hook costs $2 - $10, according to its coral decoration. The women folk of the sedentary Fantzu wear much more expensive ornaments which may amount to several hundred dollars.

301 None of these ornaments is made by the Tibetans, but by the
439 Chinese who now frequently sell very cheap and inferior ornaments made of brass. However, the valuable and artistic ornaments come from Inner Tibet and Hsik'ang. Genuine corals and semi-precious stones (turquoise, malachite) are likewise imported from Inner Tibet, whereas imitation coral is also imported from China.

Dwellings and Pastures

361 The nomadic Fantzu are joined together in separate tent com-
621 munities, but these are very loose associations. Such a tent camp consists of 4 - 40 tents, the average being probably 20 to 25. The nomads change their place of residence three times a year. They move into the first tent encampment in April and remain there until July. From July to September they occupy the second camp. In September or October the nomads come down to lower altitudes and stay there until April or /18/ May. During this time they do not live in tents but in simple loam huts grouped together in smaller or larger units. Each family returns to the same house every year.

The individual tent communities, however, do not always consist of the same families; the tribal chief (Chinese, t'ou-mu) uses

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his judgment in determining which tent community each family must join.

The winter pasture is always the same for each family. Near the winter house each family plants oats which are cut green and used during the winter as fodder. There is enough land so that everyone can plant as much oats as he needs for his cattle. The two summer pastures, on the other hand, are not always the same, a particular pasture being used only once every two years. Thus one family lives in five different pasture areas in the course of two years, on a winter pasture and two summer pastures per year. The distances between the pasture areas of a tent community are never very great. For example, the following were the distances between the pasture areas of the tent community in which I lived: winter camp to first summer camp was over 20 li (1); first summer camp to second summer camp

1. Chinese li is about 600 meters.

about 20 li; second summer camp to winter camp 40 - 50 li.

The tents of a tent community are as a rule pitched on the slope of a narrow valley. They are in long rows at irregular distances of 20 to 200 meters from one another, so that the entire settlement can be 2 - 4 kilometers long. On the bottom of the valley it is usually too damp to pitch a tent. The choice of site for a tent camp is primarily determined by the water conditions.

The tents (2) are not all the same size. Smaller tents have a

2. Illustrations, for example, in Futterer 6), pages 336, 342; detailed descriptions in Hermanns 3), page 43; Ekvall 4), page 74.

rectangular floor space of about 8 x 4 meters, larger ones about 15 x 5 meters. /19/ The cloth of the tent is a very coarse blackish brown material woven of yak hair, either by the nomad women themselves or by women of the sedentary Fantzu. The cost of the material for an entire tent averages about $50. The floor of the tent consists simply of trampled earth. The tent itself consists of a wall and a roof. The wall, about 1. 30 meters high, is a width of cloth which encloses the tent and is fastened on stakes of the proper height. The roof is made of widths of cloth sewed together horizontally at a height of 1. 80 meters and fastened to four stakes of the same height. These stakes form a smaller rectangle inside the wall, the sides of which are about one meter from the wall.

342 Cloth strips about 1 1/2 meters wide are sewed onto the sides of the horizontal tent roof. These are fastened to shorter poles (in front about 1.80 meters, on the sides and in the rear about 1 meter) outside the tent walls in such a way that they slant outward like eaves. In this way the entire space enclosed by the tent wall is covered. Around the tent a number of longer and shorter poles and stakes are hewn into the ground in order to stretch the large horizontal middle section of the tent roof and the slanting sides. These posts are fastened to the cloth of the roof with strong ropes made of yak hair. The horizontal roof consists of two symmetrical halves that converge in a line at the center of the two longitudinal sides. These two halves of the tent roof can be pulled apart slightly to permit the smoke from the fireplace below to escape.

354 The fireplace is always in the exact center of the tent and divides
342 it into two equal halves. It consists of a very primitive rectangular hearth made of loam, on the left side wall of which, as seen from the entrance, there are three fire holes. There are three corresponding round holes on top into which the cooking pots are set. The hearth does not extend from the front to the rear of one side; toward the rear it joins the place /20/ where the fuel is stored. The fuel consists of dried yak dung. In front of the hearth is the entrance to the tent. This is separated from the hearth by a wall about 2 meters wide, made of a piece of cloth stretched between special rods. Thus when one enters the tent one does not come directly into the main room but into a sort of anteroom formed by the cloth wall stretched out in front of the hearth. The person who enters is thus forced to turn right or left and therewith enters the left or right half of the tent, the two halves being sharply separated by the hearth and the adjacent area where the fuel is kept.

342 The side of the tent to the right of the entrance may be used only
562 by the men, the left side by the women. It is strictly forbidden to step across the hearth or the place where the fuel is stored. It is also considered very impolite to step over a person lying on the floor of the tent. Strangers, whether women or men, may under no circumstances enter the side not permissible to them. The residents of the tent may themselves set foot on the forbidden half only if they are alone in the tent and are obliged to fetch something from the other side. The woman, however, may not be seated in the right half. The man goes over to the left side to sleep.

382 In the section to the right is the hearth with a type of very primitive "k'ang" (1), that is to say, two short tubular passages are

1. The living room of the North Chinese house has

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a k'ang on the outside wall opposite the door. It is a 352
couch raised about 60 - 70 /centimeters/ from the floor, made of bricks and hollow inside. The hollow area is equipped with drafts and serves as a stove which is fed from an opening in the outside wall.

dug through the floor. Fire can be kindled in these and they are connected with the hearth so that the fire gets sufficient draft. /21/

The furnishings are placed chiefly along the wall where the tent 778
roof slopes down and where the tent is thus lower. On the rear wall 353
of the right side, next to the place where the fuel is kept, 1/2 meter 352
above the floor, is the family altar, a simple rectangular wooden box about 1/2 meter high, 40 centimeters deep and 1 1/2 meters long. On this family altar stand bronze statues of the Buddha and small bowls for holy water. The rest of the space along the tent wall is chiefly filled with bags made of coarse yak hair, in which provisions are stored, with dried yak and sheep dung, with saddle gear for horses and yaks, and with skins. Guns are often kept on a separate stand. Dried meat and yak maws in which butter is stored are hung from the ceiling of the tent. A section of the right side of the tent is sometimes closed off by boards not more than 20 centimeters high and covered with dog skins. This serves as a special resting place.

The women's section on the left contains first of all the utensils 234
needed for the dairy. These are chiefly three cylindrical wooden 462
tubs 1 to 1 1/2 meters high and 75 centimeters in diameter, whose 342
staves are held together by hoops made of withes. One of these tubs, usually the smallest, nearest the rear wall, is used to store the sour milk. In the center is the butter cask; nearest the front, a large milk tub. The tub containing the butter is closed at the top and has a hole through which runs a long, heavy stamper. Suspended from the ceiling of the tent, above the milk tub, is a bag of coarse material, through which the whey can be strained from the curds.

Next to the tent a short stake is driven into the ground, to which 231
the watch dog is tied. In front of many tents there are also one or 788
two poles 3 meters high with lines from which hang prayer pennants. 343
Very occasionally there is a simple round sheepfold next to the tent, made of boards and poles.

The winter houses are also very primitive. They are usually /22/
placed along the rear wall of a courtyard enclosed by mud walls two 342
meters high. The only opening in the enclosure is a gate in the

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342 front wall. A large part of the yard is set off by a low wall and serves
[343] as a cattle pen. Opposite this on the narrow side is a stall for horses and yaks, formed merely by a roof about 2 meters wide and open toward the yard. The house itself consists of two rooms about two meters high with simple mud walls and a Tibetan-style flat roof formed of horizontal wooden beams laid side by side, with layers of earth spread over them. The two rooms are furnished with simple k'angs which are heated from the outside, as in China. Almost all these winter houses look very dilapidated. Next to the winter houses one sometimes sees large stacks of dried yak dung, resembling our haystacks.
[372] [237]

Work of the Men and Women

512 The daily schedule and the work of the tent nomads is very simple. They sleep surprisingly little. They get up at the first hint of dawn and do not go to bed until two or three hours after dark. They only occasionally take a nap in the middle of the day. As soon as they get up, they milk their animals and drive them out to pasture.

462 The men work very little. Their favorite occupation is riding in company and paying calls, during which the main topic of conversation is pasture conditions and choice of pasture sites. When it grows dark they chat and drink tea. Oddly enough, the men make [294] their own clothes.

462 For the rest, practically all the work falls on the women. They
234 must milk, make butter and dried curds. Cooking, however, takes little time, in view of the simplicity of the Tibetan diet.

283 The women also spin. The fleece is first /23/ washed in cold
462 water, wrung out and then dried on the meadow. In spinning they
286 wind the wool on a short wooden stick and, with a simple hand spindle consisting of a weighted wooden stick, they spin off a coarse yarn. The wool which the women spin they take to the sedentary Fantzu women who can weave a cloth used in making tsamba bags. The nomad women buy back this cloth with money, butter or wool. The cloth for their woolen coats and pelerines they have woven by [435] Chinese in Ho-chou. The Chinese weaver gets one cent for a foot of material. The nomad women themselves know how to weave only the coarse yak hair cloth from which tents are made. The men and women also twist coarse ropes of yak hair which they use to stretch the tent material, for bridles and for tying up their horses. Other feminine handiwork, such as knitting and embroidering, is not done by the nomad women.

372 Gathering fuel is one of the important occupations of the women.
237 They must collect yak and sheep dung, dry it and stack it properly.

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The women of the tent nomads do not go out to work like the 462
wives of the sedentary Fantzu. Year in and year out their whole time is taken up by caring for the animals.

The children are put to work early tending the animals. The 857
girls must, in addition, also gather dung, but the boys do not help in this occupation. The girls start to milk when they are 12 or 13 years old.

Animal Husbandry

The Mewu-Fantzu live exclusively from the products of their 231
livestock. They keep yaks, cattle, sheep and horses, also dogs, of course. The most important animal is the yak. The yaks of the Mewu region are generally pure black, occasionally /24/ spotted with white. There are yaks with and without horns. Lack of horns seems to be a recessive hereditary characteristic. There are wealthy families who own more than 100 yaks; but the average number is much less. The 20 tents in the community where I lived together owned 700 yaks, which means an average of 35 per family. The highest number of yaks per family in this community was 70, the lowest 7. It can also happen that poor people do not own any yaks at all, but merely rent them. A family of five needs more than 10 milch cows.

Not all families have bulls, but the owner of a bull does not get paid for covering. A cow drops her first calf when she is 2 to 3 years old. The gestation period of the yak is 9 months. Most calves are born in the third or fourth month. In the seventh or eighth month the cows are again covered. Good cows are allowed to grow very old; they are alsughtered only when they are 17 or 18 years old. The calf is gradually weaned, but the amount of milk it gets is reduced very soon after birth. When it is one or two months old the calf gets a nose plug, to prevent it from sucking. The adult yak gets a nose ring made of a bent length of a sturdy withe. Calves and young bulls are often driven to pasture in pairs with their fore-legs tied together, so that they cannot stray too far away.

The oxen are used as pack animals when they are three years old. At the age of 15 or 16 they are fattened and killed. The yaks graze all the year round; only when there is deep snow, which may happen every year in January and February, do they get some green cut oats. The yaks are never given any salt, and therefore always show a definite hunger for it. Milking is done exclusively by the 234
women and girls. The yak cow will let itself be milked only when her calf is tethered near by. A very good milch cow gives a bucket

234 of milk three times a day; an average cow gives two bucketfuls for the day. A milk bucket holds an average of /25/ 2 1/2 liters. The [415] buckets are made and repaired by Chinese. Good buckets are made of pine wood, first-class ones of cypress. Osiers are used as hoops.

The milk is drunk boiled or eaten as clabber. But most of the milk is used to make butter. Casein is derived from the buttermilk, and is filtered through a coarse bag, whereupon it is dried, stored in the form of coarse powder, and eaten. The whey is fed to the dogs. The butter is stored in mutton or yak maws, often for a long time, "up to more than 10 years." This old butter which gets very rancid is chiefly used in the lamaseries to feed guests at the festivals or to make Buddha images. Surplus butter is sent to the temple in which the son of the family is a lama. Lamas also often come to the tents and beg for butter, which is always willingly given to them. The price for old and new butter is the same. It comes to $0.50 per chin. (1) At home as well as in the temples old butter is made into

1. Chin, the Chinese pound, equals 605 grams.

lard in order to clarify it. This lard is used only as fuel for the sacrificial lamps.

236 The long yak hair from the animal's belly, back, and legs is plucked once a year in the fifth or sixth month. This is done by tying down the yak and winding the hair around a stick of wood and thus pulling it out in tufts. Yak hair is used to make cloth for the tent and for ropes. The latter are used to pull the tent widths taut, and as halters and hobbles for horses.

231 435 A four-year-old milch cow costs $15 to $20, an old ox ready to be slaughtered, $12 to $13. Calves are not sold. Yaks are slaughtered mostly in September and October. Some of the fresh meat is eaten, most of it is hung up to dry. The dried meat is either hung in the tent or is packed in leather. In this packed state it is often given to a temple for /26/ safekeeping. A yak skin costs $1 to $4; a good yak tail costs 10 cents, a white one, 20 to 30 cents. Yak horns are used as snuff containers, rarely as drinking horns. They also serve as milk bottles for babies.

232 Cattle are raised only by the sedentary Fantzu, not by the tent nomads. But the tent nomads buy individual bulls for breeding, because they like very much to use crossbreeds between beef cattle and yaks. A cross between a male beef and a female yak is particularly valued (Chinese: pien-niu). The pien-niu grows larger than a yak and has somewhat shorter and more curly hair than the

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yak. Its tail is thick and bushy but, unlike the yak, is clearly de- 232
fined at the root. It has larger horns than the yak. The pien-niu gets to be over 20 years old, that is, older than the yak. Male pien-niu are always castrated and used as pack oxen. The pien-niu is valued because of its greater strength, its longer life and better milk production; it also withstands the warmer climate of lower altitudes better than the yak. For the yak breeder, therefore, the pien-niu has a similar position as the mule has for the horse breeder.

The pien-niu cow drops her first calf after 3 to 4 years. The 231
price of a milch cow fluctuates between $40 and $50, and is thus 435
twice as high as that of a yak cow. A yak maw full of butter is the annual rent for a good pien-niu. A maw contains about 18 chin. The cross between a male yak and a female beef cow is called szu-pien-niu in Chinese. It is not regarded as valuable as the pien-niu, although it also lives to be 20 years old. The szu-pien-niu has a bushy tail, smaller horns and above all weaker legs than the pien-niu. The price of a szu-pien-niu is $30 to $40. The cross between the yak bull and the pien-niu cow (chia-pien-niu) is valued even less. It has the same fur as beef cattle, but is larger. This cross-breed lives to be only 10 years old. It costs about $30. A cross between /27/ a bull and a female pien-niu is called ga-ba. It lives to be no more than 7 or 8 years old. A ga-ba calf is immediately slaughtered, and the mother is then milked.

After yaks, sheep (1) are the most important domestic animals. 231

1. With regard to breeds, see Hermanns 3), page 87.

One family seldom owns more than 700 sheep; but there are also families that have no sheep at all. In the community made up of 20 tents where I lived there were seven families who had no sheep. The total number of sheep in this community came to more than 9,000, which means an average of 700 per herd owner. Sheep are not leased. One figures 40 to 50 ewes to one ram. The sheep drop their first young at two years; it drops only one lamb. A good ewe is allowed to die a natural death; otherwise sheep are slaughtered when they are two or three years old. Wethers are slaughtered at three or four years. A good sheep costs $3 to $3.50, a fat wether [436] $9.

Like the yaks, the sheep are driven to pasture early in the morn- 233
ing and back to the tents at night. Some herd owners have simple, circular sheepfolds made of wooden beams next to their tents, into which they drive their sheep at night.

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236 The sheep are sheared once a year in May or June. Neighbors [476] help each other in this task without charge. It takes an average of two days to shear the herd of one family. A wether gives 1 chin of wool annually, a ewe, 1/2 chin. A chin of fleece costs 20 to 50 cents. At the time of my visit the demand for wool was so great 237 that the highest price was paid. A sheepskin costs $0.60 to $1. 435 However, skins of unborn lambs cost $2 to $4. A sheep gut is sold for $0.20 to $0.30; in He-tso, the nearest large town, the price goes 262 up to $0.40 when it is resold. More mutton than yak meat is eaten. Lambs are eaten only if they have died of some disease. The Fantzu do not drink sheep milk, but they use it for butter if they do not have enough yak milk.

231 /28/ The sheep often suffer from paralysis of both forelegs, and many die of this disease. Most of the animals die of starvation in February or March, especially if there has been much snow during [476] the winter. If a family loses all its animals, everybody helps out by giving them others. The tent nomads do not often keep goats, but the sedentary Fantzu often do, and they also drink goat's milk.

Every family has at least one horse. The Mewu-Fantzu have a small breed of horses that measures about 130 centimeters at the withers. These Tibetan ponies are somewhat smaller and lighter than the Mongolian ponies or those from the provinces of Ch'inghai and Kansu. They are closer to the tarpan (Equus gmelini) than the Przewalski type (1). These horses have a great deal of endurance

1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 164 ff.

and are especially adapted for use in mountainous terrain. They 232 have hard hoofs which are not shoed in the steppes. Good stallions 135 are selected for breeding, the rest are castrated at four years. These horses live an average of 10 years; the men break them in at 3 years. The average price of a riding horse is $40 to $50; the highest price is $100. No horses are imported, but horse traders come from T'ao-chou and He-tso, and the Mewu-Fantzu sell them horses. Mules are not used by the tent nomads; asses cannot stand the high altitude.

492 The simple horse bridles of leather with brass mountings are made and sold by the Chinese, likewise the iron snaffles and the stirrups which can be of iron or brass. The Mewu-Fantzu use Hungarian saddles /bocksattel/ the wooden frames of which are made by the sedentary Tebu-Fantzu on the northern slopes of the

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Min-shan, and sold to the nomads. (2) These frames are put together 492

2. Compare Rockhill, page 716 f. Wooden frames are used as pack saddles for yaks and pien-niu. These are also customarily used in China. Cf. Rockhill, Plate 26.

by the nomads among whom there are regular saddlers. The wooden frame is /29/ put on a thick felt pad which serves as a saddle cushion and is covered with gaily patterned pulu cloth. The saddle is slightly upholstered and is covered with leather; often it is decorated with brass mountings. A person who is worried about the health of his horse ties a bundle of gaily colored silk ribbons on its mane. This must be consecrated by a lama.

Each tent has at least one or two dogs. One of them is kept on 231
a chain fastened to a stake, the other is allowed to run loose. In the winter a hole is dug for the chained dog so that he can protect himself from the cold. The dogs get to be about 80 centimeters tall and have a very shaggy coat, especially in winter, of black, yellowish brown or yellowish gray color. They are very alert and bark at the slightest provocation. Often every dog of a camp will bark for hours, especially at night, when they catch the scent of some beast of prey. It is very difficult to approach a tent because of these dogs. One always has to have hands and pockets full of stones to be able to defend oneself against them. One can approach a tent without danger 231
only when its inmates hold back the unleashed dogs. Riders like to 411
carry a stick 60 to 70 centimeters long, to which is fastened a whip of leather about 1 meter long, with an angular iron tip. When they pass or stop at a tent they twirl it about to protect their horse from the dogs. You often see horses with large scars on their hind shanks 231
from dog bites; they are, of course, particularly skittish and often become restless even when they hear a dog bark far off. The dogs are fed tsamba and whey, sometimes also meat scraps. A good watchdog costs about as much as a yak, a less desirable one, as much as a sheep. The dogs are allowed to grow old and die a natural death. A good dog skin which is preferred as a cover for the couch, costs up to $10 or more, sometimes, however, only $2. [237 435]

/30/ The only useful crop which the tent nomads plant is oats. 243
As we said above, each family sows some oats next to its relatively low lying winter dwelling. The crop is planted in the fifth Chinese month and is cut green in the ninth and tenth. It is used as fodder for the horses in winter, less often also as yak fodder. All the oat

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243 fields belong to the tribal head (t'ou-mu) and are distributed by him. Each family must pay rent to the t'ou-mu for the oat fields they cultivate, and this is usually paid off in the form of butter. The oat fields are ploughed by oxen only shortly before sowing time. The amount of oats planted is measured according to 1 to 4 days' work (tien), depending on the size of the family and their wealth in livestock. A day's work is usually 15 mou (about 1 hectare). The
222 tent nomads use very few wild plants. From the fifth to the eighth month they find many field mushrooms on the alpine meadows. They also gather chüo-ma, the edible tubers of potentilla anserina, which are cooked like vegetables, and the roots of which are used to
313 make incense sticks. Wood is needed only for tent stakes, poles for prayer flags and sheep pens. Pine is generally used, which is bought from the sedentary Fantzu.

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224 Hunting is not an important occupation because the Mewu-Fantzu are relatively strict Buddhists. They have no hunting dogs. Usually it is only by chance that an animal which may be valuable in one way or another is killed. Now and then a gazelle hunt is arranged. Trapping is not carried on. The game hunted includes groundhogs, hares, gazelles (Gazella gutturosa Pall.), blue sheep (Pseudois najaur Hdgs.), musk deer, foxes, wildcats, lynxes and wolves. The latter especially are feared because they prey on the animals; human beings are scarcely ever attacked by wolves. Birds
[534] are not eaten and therefore not hunted. As an exception, a vulture is sometimes shot and the bones of its wings are used to make flutes. /31/

262 Since the tent nomads are exclusively cattle-raisers, they are restricted primarily to an animal diet. Their most important food is butter. As we have said, they keep it for a long time, although most of the people prefer fresh butter. They also eat dried casein in the form of a coarsely ground powder (Tibetan: chü-ra), sour milk and fresh, boiled milk. Whey is drunk only by poor people, usually it is fed to the dogs. All vegetable food and condiments, with the exception of mushrooms and chüo-ma, must be bought. The only important vegetable food is "tsamba" (parched barley flour), with which the nomads are always adequately supplied by neighboring sedentary Fantzu or by Chinese, who sell it to them
[415] according to weight. It is stored in bags of coarse woolen material. Wealthy people at times deposit a large supply of tsamba, enough for two or three years, in a temple.

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The ordinary meal consists of butter and tsamba, but more butter 252
is eaten than tsamba. This is the way it is done: they fill a wooden bowl with tea (1) and add a good clump of butter (about a heaping

1. Such a bowl is on an average 5 centimeters deep and has a diameter at the brim of 10 to 12 centimeters. Rock- [415]
hill 1), Plate 14, Figure 3.

tablespoonful in the European sense) which melts in the hot tea. As they drink the butter tea, they try to blow away as much of the butter floating on top as possible, until a certain amount of tea and butter remain in the bowl. Then they sprinkle a suitable amount of tsamba into the bowl and knead it, along with the remaining tea and butter, with their fingers. When they have shaped it into a ball, they eat it without adding any other ingredients. The casein powder is also soaked in tea. Meat - of yak and sheep - is not eaten every [262]
day. They eat the meat of animals that have been killed or that have died of some disease. Sheep and yaks /32/ are not slaughtered [253]
but strangled. Most of the sheep and yaks are killed in September and October after they have grown fat on summer pastures. Some of the meat is eaten fresh; most of it is dried. The fresh meat is always boiled in water, not roasted. Hunks of cooked meat are cut off with a knife and eaten with the fingers. The intestines are stuffed with tsamba or Chinese bread (mo-mo) and eaten. The large intestine is generally used for this purpose, since the nomads have found that they can profitably sell the small intestine. "Mo-mo" is bought from Chinese bakers who live in the Chinese settlements next to the monasteries. As a rule, a yak is killed by several families together. Pork is eaten only at New Year. For this occasion wealthy [527]
families buy one or two pigs from the sedentary Fantzu. Poorer people buy no more than one pig which they pay for in butter the following summer.

Besides pork which, according to Hermanns, (1) is not generally 262

1. Hermanns 3), page 58. According to Ekvall 4), page 78, only the nomads who live farther away from the Chinese eat no pork.

eaten by the Amdo-nomads, yak meat and mutton is, of course, also eaten for New Year and at feasts, along with butter and tsamba, baked goods made of unparched barley flour, or mo-mo which is usually fried in rape-seed oil. Besides this, the nomads also buy

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262 noodles made of both wheat flour and bean flour, carrots and white cabbage in Ho-chou. For feasts wealthy people prepare "pao-tzu," i.e., pastries of cooked flour dough, Chinese style, which are filled with garlic. Rice is also occasionally served. It is prepared in various ways, preferably boiled until it is soft, with sugar added.

263 273 Garlic and paprika are the chief condiments, also hua-chiao (Zanthoxylum piperitum D.C.). Salt comes from the Kokonor.

733 Wine is purchased from the Chinese who make it from Tibetan barley. It is not very potent. Most Tibetans drink only on festive occasions; but now and then one also finds confirmed /33/ drunkards. When they are drunk the Fantzu often get very raucous and crude. They sing and shout and brandish their swords. These drunken bouts often end in a fight and sometimes also in murder.

276 Most Tibetans do not smoke because tobacco is very expensive. When they do, they buy pipes from the Chinese or make them themselves of wood or bone. They use the tibia of the sheep, just like the Northern Chinese, for example, in Shansi. Taking snuff is much more common than smoking, but the snuff contains no tobacco. They either make it themselves from a mixture of tobacco ashes and the finely pulverized ash that remains when sheep dung is burned, or they buy Chinese snuff in Ho-chou. The latter is made of wood ashes mixed with various "medicines." The snuff powder is stored in yak horns or in snuff boxes. (1)

1. Rockhill 1), Plate 17, Figures 2 - 4.

264 The nomads eat three meals a day. Breakfast is rather late, after the livestock has been milked and driven out to pasture. The midday meal is eaten when the sun is at its height, the evening meal rather late, after dark. The food - mainly tsamba and butter - is the same at all meals. Guests are also offered food three times a day. Men and women eat the same food, but they are not permitted to eat together in the tent. The men eat in the right-hand section of the tent, the women in the left. The food must be handed from one section to the other around the hearth; it is considered very impolite to hand it over the hearth. (2)

2. so as not to offend the spirit of the hearth: Hermanns 3), page 48.

252 415 The cooking pots are large kettles made of brass about 80 centimeters in diameter and 60 centimeters high. They are

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made mostly in T'ao-chou where there is a large copper and brass industry. A kettle of this type costs $10 to $20. The large copper /34/ tea kettles are also made in T'ao-chou, as well as the stands for the tea kettles and the tripods of brass or iron. The tsamba is kept in square, open wooden boxes; larger supplies are kept in bags. Chinese porcelain bowls are rarely used for tea and food, wooden bowls being commonly employed, and they are imported from Szechuan. (Sung-p'an or Nga-wa). Chinese from the region of Ho-chou also furnish cheap bowls made of birch wood. For cooking, large iron ladles are used which must not be touched by the lips nor come in contact with the rim of the food bowl. Homemade wooden spoons are also used in cooking. Small tablespoons, mostly of birch, are imported from the sedentary Fantzu who live in forested areas (for example, Sung-p'an, Tebu-Fantzu from the region of Cho-ni) or from Chinese.

The hearth is made of loam and is about 1/2 meter high. On the side it has three holes for adding fuel, and on top three corresponding circular openings on which cooking pots are placed. Sheep and yak dung are used exclusively for fuel, the former only to kindle the fire. The dung is collected only by the women, mostly by the younger girls, and carefully dried. Osier baskets are used for gathering dung. A large basket full of dried yak dung, enough for 2 days of cooking, costs 20 copper coins (4 cents). Matches are used occasionally, but the old flint (1) and steel are

1. Rockhill 1), Plate 9, Figures 2 - 4.

still commonly employed. The steel is placed in a silver handle set with corals. The fire is fanned with a simple bellows (2) made

2. Rockhill 1), page 709.

of sheepskin, to which is attached a crude iron tube. The skin is sewed to a cone-shaped bag, the point of which is attached to the iron tube. In blowing, the large opening (base) of the bag is rhythmically squeezed together with the lower arm. The hearth fire /35/ also serves to light up the tent. Butter lamps which consist of small, shallow copper and brass bowls about 6 centimeters in diameter, are used only for ritualistic purposes. Only carefully clarified lard is burned in them.

We can scarcely say that the tent nomads have any special

craft. The women know how to spin wool, but cannot weave. The only craft with which a woman can earn money is that of hairdresser. Only the men can sew, and they make all the clothing and shoes. They use Chinese cotton thread and crude needles imported from Szechuan. The only men's craft besides tailoring is saddle-making. Often, however, men earn money with their oxen as drivers of pack animals. The tents are made mostly by lamas.

Basketry is not highly developed. The large willow baskets used for gathering yak dung are sometimes made at home, but are generally imported from the neighboring sedentary Fantzu. Shallow baskets are used for storing special provisions, for example, mushrooms, and these are obtained from the Tebu-Fantzu.

The livestock of the nomads constitutes their entire wealth. They have practically no money. In livestock there are great differences between rich and poor. It often happens that a family or an entire tent community suddenly becomes impoverished, if a great many animals starve after a deep snowfall, or if many die of an epidemic. If a family loses all its animals, friends and neighbors help them out. There is very little begging. In the nomad settlements one never sees beggars; a few may be seen around the monasteries where they get a little tsamba on festive occasions or at burials.

Taxation is still very low: $0.50 to $1, according to the size of the family, must be paid annually to the tribal chief. The Chinese police collect it from him twice a year, in the second and eighth month. No monetary tax need be paid to the lamaseries, /36/ but each family must contribute food for the general temple festivals and to those temples where they have relatives among the lamas. Lamas also come to the tent camps very often to collect butter for the lamaseries, and this is always freely given.

Trade is entirely in the hands of Mohammedans and Chinese chiefly the former. There are quite a number of things that are purchased with money; farther in the interior of the grasslands there is more barter. During the first years of the Republic silver dollars came to be used in place of unminted silver (taels). Smaller units of exchange are the tsuan (?) and copper coins. A tsuan is the equivalent of 49 copper coins; 4 tsuan are 36 cents; 11 1/2 tsuan are 1 silver dollar. In 1936 there was no paper money among the Fantzu, but it will soon replace silver which is being recalled by Chinese officials.

The nomads sell the following to Mohammedans and Chinese: sheep, horses and yaks, sheep guts, horse and yak hides, horse and

439 yak tails, skins of sheep, of lambs and unborn lambs, of dogs, foxes
237 and groundhogs, more rarely skins of goats, gazelles and wolves. After New Year, for which pigs were slaughtered, they also sell pig bristles. Finally, they sell musk, field mushrooms, the chüo-ma root (Potentilla anserina) and hsiao-hsiang, a plant used in making incense candles.

439 The Chinese sell to the Fantzu: dress goods (silk and cotton), leopard skins for the men's fur coats, ornaments, weapons, kitchen utensils, especially cooking pots, needles, thread, matches, bridles with snaffle and stirrup. Tsamba is purchased from the sedentary Fantzu, often also wood. Woodenware, especially saddles, eating bowls and spoons come chiefly from the sedentary Fantzu who live in southern Kansu and northern Szechuan.

201 Bargaining is carried on very cautiously. The Tibetans do not
439 come out with the price immediately, but /37/ according to a custom also widespread in China, the two parties shake hands under their long sleeves, and the price demanded of the buyer is indicated by stretching out the fingers. They keep a dead-pan expression, so that they will not betray toward one another their real feelings about the transaction. Often such a transaction in sign language is carried on not by the two partners alone; bystanders act as go-betweens or lend support to one of the two parties, but likewise only in sign language under their sleeves.

439 The Mohammedan and Chinese traders come to the tent camps of the Mewu-Fantzu. (1) But the Fantzu also often go to the

1. For details see Ekvall 4).

Chinese settlements next to the temples on the caravan road from Ho-chou to Labrang, or to the nearest Chinese cities. An important trading station for the Mewu-Fantzu is the Chinese-Mohammedan settlement next to the large monastery of He-tso; somewhat farther away and less important is the trading station near the monastery of Ka-chia-chiu-szu; a large trading center still farther away is the one near the large temple city of Labrang. The more sizeable Chinese cities visited by the Mewu-Fantzu are the district cities of T'ao-chou (the old part of the city), Ho-chou and Ning-hou. In T'ao-chou they buy chiefly metalware, for example, copper and brass kettles. Frequently the nomads bring wood with their yaks from the sedentary Fantzu of the lower areas to Ho-chou and Ning-hou, and buy goods with the money they have thus earned. The nomads

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do not go beyond Ho-chou, Ning-hou and T'ao-chou to trade; but they do undertake longer journeys to famous places of pilgrimage. Some time in their lives most of them go to Kum-bum, more often to Labrang. Small groups of four or five tent nomads occasionally also go on pilgrimages to the large sacred cities of Inner Tibet, Lhasa and Shigatse. /38/

In the summer of 1936 all the Mewu-Fantzu undertook the two-to-three-days' pilgrimage to Labrang in order to see the Panchan-Lama, the spiritual head of the Lamaists, who happened to be there at the time. Individual tent nomads also accompany lamas and Living Buddhas on journeys into Inner Tibet.

Formal education is unknown among the tent nomads. The lamas alone are educated and versed in purely scholastic Tibetan knowledge. Only those laymen can read who were once lamas themselves, but for some reason laid aside the spiritual garb. All contracts and agreements are verbal.

The language of the tent nomads is the northeast Tibetan dialect of the former Tibetan province of Amdo. Some tent nomads speak a little Chinese, which they learn from Chinese and Mohammedan traders, with whom they do business. In counting and calculating they often use their rosaries; as yet they do not use the Chinese abacus. If they have complicated transactions, they seek help from a lama. They do not use special measuring rods. Cloth is measured in squares, the side of a square being equal to the width of the cloth strip. They have no particular square measure for their pastureland; hills, roads and brooks are their only boundaries. They measure oat fields in terms of a "day's work," i. e. the surface which can be ploughed in one day with one yak. Their unit of weight is the Chinese chin (pound) at 32 /sic/ liang (ounces). They try to approximate the weight determined by Chinese officials in He-tso. Sliding weights are measured with simple Chinese hand-scales and a stone. Capacity measures, like the Chinese tou (bushel), are not used because there are no products traded in this way.

The Mewu-Fantzu have adopted the Chinese calendar. (1) However, they do not themselves buy the Chinese calendar books; the scholarly lamas figure out the Chinese calendar for the people and /39/ post it on the temple gate, so that everyone will know whether

1. as have the Tibetans in general, Cf. Wadell 7), page 451.

177 the month is long or short and on which days the 24 chieh-ch'i occur,
805 that is, the dates according to which the weather predictions are
796 made. The Fantzu do not celebrate any Chinese calendar day except New Year. Not everybody knows when his birthday is or how old he is. They celebrate only the birthday of a Living Buddha, which coincides with the date of death of his previous incarnation.

532 The lay Mewu-Fantzu carry on art of any kind as little as they
341 do education. The arts of architecture, painting and sculpture are
792 practiced exclusively by the lamas. Only laymen who were once lamas may possibly engage in an art, for example, painting.

306 Although the tent nomads are very fond of ornaments, all their jewelry, except what comes from Inner Tibet, is made by Chinese and Mohammedans, albeit in strict Tibetan style. Nor do the women engage in any kind of artistic handwork, as for example embroidery.

533 It is different with music. The nomads cultivate simple folk music as well as religious music. Their only musical instrument is the flute, which is made of brass or of the wing bones of the vulture. Both men and women play the flute. They play mostly in spring, in the second and third months, in their tents, out on the pasture and along the road. Special occasions for music-making are New Year and family festivals, where there is much drinking and courtship. They enjoy singing, and do a great deal of it, particularly the young men and girls, without instrumental accompaniment. They have drinking songs, shepherd songs, love songs sung on the mountains, and a New Year's song. Once I also heard a monotonous work song sung by women who were washing fleece. Most of the songs are sung in alternating parts for boys and girls. The melodies are reminiscent of melancholy /40/ Russian folk tunes, sometimes also Alpine yodels. I succeeded in noting down the following songs which were sung in the mountains in alternating parts between boys and girls:

I.
1. Do not go away.
2. When you return I'll tell you something nice.

II.
1. When you look up, you see mountains, and beyond the mountains there is a river.
2. Even though corals and pearls look like stones, they are as dear as gold and silver.
3. Even though my friend is Chinese, he is of royal blood.

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III. 1. The arrow is fitted into the bow, the needles are in the case, we can sew silk well with them. 533

2. It is much better if I can meet my Chinese friend on the slope of the mountain, near the huts (this means: it is more convenient for the Tibetan girl to have a rendezvous with a Chinese than to work in her tent camp).

IV. 1. I shall now climb up the mountain; tell me whether there is a Fu-yeh (Living Buddha) there, and whether he will bless me (touch me with his hand).

2. I shall now climb down into the valley; is there peace there now so that I can do my trading?

3. I shall visit my friends in the village, will the villagers then think ill of me? Is my friend at home?

/41/ Religion

In the religious field conditions among the Tibetans are similar to those of the Chinese, that is to say, a more highly developed religious system was superimposed on an ancient primitive folk religion which nevertheless remained alive in the heart of the people. Just as the vulgar form of Taoism developed essentially from Chinese popular religion, so the Bon religion developed from Tibetan folk religion. Superimposed upon this in China is Confucianism and the specifically Chinese form of Buddhism, while in Tibet Lamaism represents the specifically Tibetan form of Buddhism. (1) However, 771 184

1. Compare in this connection Rockhill, page 730: "Primitive Lamaism may be defined as a priestly mixture of Shivaic mysticism, magic and Indo-Tibetan demonolatry overlaid by the thinnest veneer of Mahayana Buddhism." (Compare Wadell 7), page 17) - and Schröder 8), page 258: "The 'faith' of the Tujen combines into a common stratum which as Lamaistic folk religion covers the entire field of the Yellow church... Shamanism - Bon religion - cult of Heaven.... popular Lamaism."

the role of Buddhism in China cannot compare in importance with

771 that of Lamaism in the religious life of the Tibetans. The chief
184 reason why Lamaism has not supplanted Tibetan folk religion entirely is probably the fact that Lamaism is a very exclusive priestly religion, in the ritual of which the layman participates only very little, whereas folk religion, just as in China, corresponds most closely to the needs of the laymen, and is therefore the most indispensable to them. In Tibet, just as in China, a sort of border area has gradually arisen between Buddhist religion in its strictest sense and folk religion. In both countries Buddhism has taken over and more or less assimilated cults, rites and ideas from folk religion, and thus satisfied the religious needs of the people. The only difference has been that, in spite of its exclusiveness, Tibetan Lamaism is much more intimately interwoven with the religious, social and economic life of the entire people /42/ than is the case with Chinese Buddhism. The majority of the Chinese people are connected only very superficially with actual Buddhism, - most of them have very little or no contact with it at all. On the other hand, the religious life of present-day Tibetans is unthinkable without Lamaism.

771 We cannot, of course, attempt to give even a cursory descrip-
114 tion of Lamaistic religion in the following pages. Nor was it possible for me, during my brief stay with the Mewu-Fantzu, to gain a thorough knowledge of their folk religion. I must limit myself to a presentation of what my Chinese informer and interpreter, who was apparently interested, told me in answer to my questions about religion, what I learned from the Mewu-Fantzu themselves in conversations held through the interpreter, and my own observations and impressions. I shall try, however, to give the main characteristics of the religious life of the Tibetan layman - in this case the tent-dwelling, cattle-raising Mewu-Fantzu nomad.

186 Conversations with Tibetans which deal with their personal
771 conditions and especially with religious questions, are, of course,
124 difficult. The Tibetans are very suspicious of a stranger, being unaccustomed to the sight of foreigners, completely caught up in magic, and being unable to understand the interest of a stranger in their religious ideas and customs, which they themselves in most cases do not think about but simply accept. They are only too ready to fear that the stranger might cause harm with the knowledge he is seeking to gain. I was always obliged to wait for suitable occasions to bring the conversation around to religious problems as casually as possible. Often I had to change the subject,

when I noticed that my questions seemed suspicious to the Fantzu, and take up the thread another time or with another person. In many respects I might have penetrated more deeply into a /43/ knowledge of the religious thinking of the nomads if I had questioned a lama, and perhaps I would have been better informed. But in that case I could not have avoided getting the viewpoint of the priest, and would not have learned what were the most important things in the religious life of the laymen.

Chinese and Tibetan folk religions are very closely related. In both cases religious thinking centers around a belief in spirits, nature demons and the souls of the dead. Therefore the most important religious acts consist in propitiating these spirits which are everywhere, and in warding off the misfortune they might cause. This belief in spirits and the rituals accompanying it are, in both folk religions, combined with a very primitive belief in magic and with many other superstitions.

The Mewu-Fantzu distinguish between actual evil spirits (Tibetan: djäxe-dan or djir-dan) and the spirits of the dead which correspond to the Chinese kuei (Tibetan: dzeo). The evil spirits cause sickness of man and beast, and sometimes loss of money or war, against which in the folk religion the sorcerer (böm-bu, see below) must intervene (he corresponds to the Chinese exorcist), or the lama in the religion of Lamaism.

The kuei can bring the same kind of misfortune. Above all are feared the spirits of those who were killed in war or who met with some other violent form of death. The Mewu-Fantzu also believe in the existence of headless spirits which are particularly feared. As among the Chinese, there are people who believe they can see ghosts.

If a kuei brings on an illness, the victim is possessed by the kuei, and the böm-bu must /44/ drive him out. If the sorcerer has driven him out but has been unable to destroy him, the kuei likes to station himself at crossroads. Hence people avoid them, especially at night, and prefer to make a detour. The souls of the dead which enter into the body of an animal, according to the Buddhistic belief in the transmigration of souls, are also feared, especially, as we have said, if they have died a violent death.

There is also a lively belief in nature demons, - mountain spirits, earth spirits and water spirits. Earth spirits are everywhere, and correspond to the t'u-ti-shen of the Chinese. The earth spirit is called "sa-tja"; like t'u-ti, he has a wife. He lives in the valley, usually along water. If one offends earth spirits, they can revenge

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776 themselves by bringing sickness. If someone is suddenly seized with
753 violent internal pains, it is feared above all that the earth spirits have been offended. You can offend them by scratching up the earth, a belief which is strongly reminiscent of Chinese conceptions regarding feng-shui (geomancy).

778 I did not hear anything among the Mewu-Fantzu about water spirits, but in Labrang there is a sacred spring. Once as I was riding by, I saw four lamas slowly encircle this spring, amid song and drumbeat, a ceremony which is performed when the weather is unfavorable, particularly when it is too wet or too dry.

776 There is also a cult of tree spirits among the sedentary Mewu-Fantzu who live below the timber line.

Of the earth spirits in the narrower sense, we must distinguish mountain spirits. In Tibet, as in China, there are mountains whose spirits or gods are the objects of special veneration. The most notable among these is the Amne Machin range in the northeastern reaches of Tibet, about which little is known. /45 In the large lamasery of He-tso which lies between Labrang and the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu, a friendly lama, one of the lamasery artists, made for me a beautiful picture of Amne Ma chin as a mounted male god surrounded by numerous other gods. (The picture was unfortunately lost in the chaos of war.)

In the more restricted area of the Mewu-Fantzu the mountain spirits known as "ami" who are pictured as living in the "obo," (1)

1. In re "obo" and "ami" see Rockhill, page 734. "obo" is a Mongolian word.

are the most venerated. It took me a long time and required many conversations before I was able to understand the whole complex of ideas surrounding the obo and its ami.

778 Every mountain on which there stands an obo (Tibetan: lab-dza) is particularly sacred. The obo of the nomadic Mewu-Fantzu consists of a wooden structure into which, year by year, sacrificial wooden darts are stuck, so that the obo looks like a bundle or bouquet of darts often more than two meters high. Twigs of bushes are also stuck into this bundle of darts. The darts vary in size, and may be a meter or more long. Every Fantzu visits the obo at least once a year and takes with him a wooden dart or the branch of a shrub as an offering. The t'ou-mu (chieftain) has the privilege of giving especially long darts. Tufts of sheep wool and khadaks are also stuck into the obo.

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stuck into the obo. 000

The ami who dwell in the obo are regarded as tutelary spirits of 776 man and beast; they guard against sickness, cattle diseases and other misfortunes, as for example, the threat of war. Among the sedentary Fantzu they not only protect the animals, but make the fields fertile as well. In war the ami are leaders and protect people against being wounded. Personal offerings are frequently made to the obo or the ami-spirit, especially when there is sickness in the family or when other misfortunes occur. For example, I observed four riders with two long /46/ wooden darts wound with juniper shrubs, place them on the obo near my tent.

Oddly enough, I was told that the ami can be very much disturbed by predatory animals (wolves, wildcats, foxes).

Once a year a general obo festival is held, when the largest num- 776 ber of darts and khadaks are offered. In time the weather destroys many darts, so that the obo only gradually increases in size.

It seems that the obo are erected on elevations that have been 778 held sacred since ancient times. At any rate, my interpreter Wang had never seen the erection of a new obo. However, the Fantzu say that the obo in the northeastern part of the territory is much older than the one in the northwest.

Each obo has its anniversary on a specific day of the year. In the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu there is a large obo that outranks the others, and is worshiped by the nomads as well as the sedentary Fantzu. Its anniversary is the 14th day of the 5th (Chinese) month. There are two more obo in the uplands, which are revered by the nomads only, and at a lower elevation three obo for the sedentary Mewu-Fantzu.

The cult of the obo is a noteworthy example of the syncretism 777 of folk religion and Lamaism: 778

The ami (mountain spirit) which is imagined as living in the 776 obo and which was without doubt an original element of Tibetan folk belief, has a strange relationship to the incarnations of Lamaistic religion. There is an obo for every lamasery, and it is erected on an elevation overlooking the confines of the lamasery, being to a certain extent analogous to the relationship of a Chinese pagoda to a district city. In the magical thinking of the Tibetans the ami dwelling in the obo is related to an incarnation (fu-yeh, huo-fu). Thus there exists in some measure a mystical trinity - obo, incarnation and its corresponding Buddha or Bodhisattva of the Western paradise. /47/ As a result, certain festivals are celebrated at the

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obo and in the lamasery on identical days of the year.

The day of the obo festival is also celebrated as the birthday of fu-yeh. My interpreter, trying to make clear to me the relationship between obo and fu-yeh, once compared the obo with a p'ai-wei, i. e., a Chinese ancestral tablet, since the deceased fu-yeh is thought of as dwelling in the obo as well as in the Western paradise.

On New Year's, on the fourth day of the first Chinese month, to be exact, a festival is held in the temple of the lamasery. On this occasion fireworks are set off in honor of the deceased incarnations. At the same time there is a festival at the obo to invoke the mountain spirit. On this occasion butter, tea, a wether (!) and cypress wood are sacrificed. A piece of meat from each of the four extremities and the breast, the ears and the lower jaw are burned with the cypress wood, to indicate that in reality the entire animal has been sacrificed. This offering is made in order to safeguard man and beast and protect the country from war. Thus Lamaistic religious practices are here combined with animal sacrifice which stands in sharp contrast to actual Buddhism. (1)

1. Schröder's 8) account of the mountain spirit of the Tujen in the Sining region is very noteworthy for the manifold combinations which the spirit inhabiting the obo can take on: "The mountain spirit is bound to a certain locale and has its stronghold, its permanent dwelling, in the obo. It can enter the shaman as an assistant spirit, and take possession of him in a trance. The earth god also has its dwelling in the obo; it is in the layer of earth."

It is also characteristic for the syncretism of folk religion and Lamaism that sorcerers (böm-bu) as well as lamas can offer sacrifices at the obo.

Whereas the ami living in the obo are tutelary spirits of the entire tribe, each family also venerates special guardian spirits within their tent. These might be compared to the ancient Roman lares familiares. My Chinese interpreter called them Chia-shen (house gods, Tibetan: Yu-la). (1) There are no images of them.

1. However, compare Hermanns, page 48.

Instead, a bunch of hair from various animals hangs in the left rear

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corner of the /48/ tent, which is the home of Yu-la. The fur of all kinds of domestic animals is used, and a tuft of hair is plucked out of each animal for this purpose before it is sold or slaughtered. Thus the bundle constantly increases in size. After a meal, tea, butter, and milk are smeared on the bundle of hair for the house god.

On the altar which is found in every tent stand small statues made of bronze or brass of the Lamaistic deities. The god that seems to be most popular here is called Dzam-la. He corresponds, allegedly, to Ts'ai-shen, the god of wealth (2) of the Chinese popular re-

2. Compare Wadell, page 370.

ligion; in accordance with Lamaistic custom, water is regularly offered to this god. Another god much venerated is one that is thought of as dwelling in hell and judging the souls of the dead. He corresponds to the Chinese Yen-lo-wang. The "horse god" (Chinese: Ma-wang-yeh, Tibetan: dam-dzen) who is also worshiped in the Lamaistic temples is offered sacrifices by the sorcerers, especially when there is threat of war. He has three heads and is represented in union with its Cakti (female principle). Ts'ai-shen and Chia-shen are worshiped by men and women alike.

I did not learn anything about a worship of the heavens among the Fantzu, nor of the sun, moon and stars.

After death the soul of the deceased can turn into an evil spirit. It can descend into hell (Tibetan: nal-wa), where it is adjudicated by the judge of hell (Yen-lo-wang, Yama). But just as in China, there is a parallel belief in Buddhistic transmigration of souls, and no one is aware of any inconsistency. If a person has led a good life, he can be reborn as an incarnation (fu-yeh), if he has been bad, he becomes a woman or an animal (bovine, horse, ox, sheep). Here the belief in the transmigration of souls is sometimes confused with the belief in evil spirits into which the souls of persons who have died a violent death are transformed.

/49/ A characteristic incident had just occurred among the Mewu-Fantzu:

The t'ou-mu of the Mewu-Fantzu had a younger brother with whom he had quarreled seven or eight years before about the rule of a group of Fantzu. He had had the brother treacherously killed one day when the latter was riding across the steppes. A short time afterwards, groundhogs dug a passage behind the t'ou-mu's house with an opening inside the enclosure of his property. This was a surprising

682 and unusual thing, considering the shy nature of groundhogs. The
775 chief immediately feared that his brother might be among these groundhogs, and proclaimed a general law against groundhog hunting. This law was still enforced, although the sale of groundhog pelts brings in quite a bit of money. It probably means that the Fantzu shared or at least understood the fear of their chieftain. On the other hand, according to primitive ideas of justice, the assassination was in no way avenged, since this would have been exclusively a matter that concerned the family of the victim.

769 Ancestor worship is different from that of the Chinese. There are no ancestral tablets. In the Mewu-Fantzu dialect the ancestors are called xŏŭ. After the father or mother has died, he or she is venerated by daily sacrifices in front of the tent. Later this sacrifice is made only on the 1st, 8th, 15th and 29th of the month, and then it is gradually abandoned.

791 Just as Taoist and Buddhist priests take part in exorcism, the propitiation of offended spirits and the casting out of evil ones, so Tibetan sorcerers and lamas are enlisted for this purpose. The sorcerer corresponding to the Taoist (tao-shih) or exorcist (kan-kuei-hsien-sheng) of the Chinese popular religion is called no-hua by the Tibetans and "böm-bu" (local pronunciation) by the Chinese. Thus he is a priest of the Bon religion. He wears his hair /50/ long, and is adorned with a special head scarf. (1) There are no different kinds

1. Compare Hoffmann 9), page 137 (names), page 197 (relations to shamanism).

of böm-bu. Not every tent community has a böm-bu, and unfortunately there was none in the community I visited. The böm-bu is married and his profession - the art of carrying out exorcistic rites and writing incantations to ward off spirits - is handed down from father to son, but not to daughter or son-in-law. The altar in the tent of the böm-bu contains the customary small statues of gods and bowls for the sacrificial water, as well as a large Chinese brush with which he writes his incantations, and a long row of copper coins. He always has prayer books, although the laymen say that many böm-bu cannot read their prayerbooks, but only leaf through them. On the other hand, I was told that the böm-bu are able to understand the sacred writings of the lamas, but that, conversely, fewer educated lamas understand the sacred writings of the böm-bu. In spite of the high esteem in which the lamas are

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held, I gathered from the Mewu-Fantzu that the magic power of a böm-bu is considered greater than that of the lama, although he does not enjoy special social privileges. In cases of illness, the nomads as a rule first consult a lama who can determine which spirit has caused the illness. They are sometimes in doubt whether in a certain case exorcism by a böm-bu or a lama would be more successful. The result is that, oddly enough, a lama is first consulted, and they let him decide, by throwing dice, which exorcism would be more effective, that of the lama or the böm-bu. This is a noteworthy indication of the tolerance Lamaism has for popular religion, and it also shows that the lamas for their part do not doubt the magic power of the böm-bu. Thus I was told that in cases of serious illness, the böm-bu is generally preferred because the people believe he has greater magic power, and that he is nevertheless no more expensive than a lama.

/51/ The most common task of the böm-bu is to heal sickness with magic. The cause of the illness is assumed to be an offense against the spirits or possession by an evil spirit, and above all, enchantment by an enemy. However, sickness is not regarded as a punishment for sins. In our discussion of earth spirits, we pointed out that the Mewu-Fantzu believe that sudden illness can arise if one scratches up the ground and thus offends the earth spirits. In this case barley roasted in a kettle is sacrificed. Half of it is roasted until it is black, the other half is less thoroughly done. Both halves are then mixed and strewn on the ground. At the same time cypress wood is burned, and sacred writings are read aloud. The reading aloud of sacred writings is an essential part of the ritual of exorcism, just as it is among Chinese exorcists. The böm-bu can read the sacred writings in the tent of the sick person, but he also reads them in his own tent, on the one hand, in order to learn them, and on the other, to bring good luck to other people who have delegated him to do the reading. For a three-day treatment of an illness the böm-bu is given a sheep or $3 - $4. For reading sacred writings in his own tent throughout a forenoon, he gets about 20 cents. A lama receives the same amount for treating sickness with prayer.

As an exorcist, the böm-bu's duty is to drive out evil spirits and if possible destroy them. He can catch the evil spirits. To do this he reads the sacred writings aloud and uses a whip made of yak leather. A man stands in front of the böm-bu and holds open a bag of yak leather into which the böm-bu charms the evil spirit. A great many people stand behind the bag, threatening the evil spirit

791 with all kinds of weapons - muskets, bows and arrows, swords and
765 knives - and driving the spirit into the bag. When the spirit is
789 captured, the bag is carried outside, opened up over a fire of /52/ yak dung and symbolically emptied. The escaping evil spirit is threatened with the weapons carried by the men who accompany the bag, and this is supposed to drive the spirit into the fire where he is consumed. This burning of the spirit always takes place at a crossroad, which is why crossroads are avoided in the evening, since one never knows whether or not the burning has been successful. This type of exorcism is practiced only in cases of illness.

791 In special cases exorcistic rites are carried on simultaneously
789 by a considerable number of böm-bu. Thus before a war 10 to 20 böm-bu gather in order to curse the enemy and ask for good luck. In this case the böm-bu invoke a special god, the horse god (Ma-wang-yeh). They can also, like the lamas, invoke the mountain spirits which bring luck.

791 The böm-bu surpass the lamas in their exclusive ability to
754 practice black magic. However, they must be paid more for this than for ordinary exorcism. A böm-bu can be induced to bring sickness or a cattle epidemic down upon an enemy, but for this he must be paid with a yak or a horse, whether or not he is successful.

When black magic is practiced with the help of a böm-bu, a dog is killed and its blood used. The name of the person to be bewitched is written on a slip of paper, along with a magic formula. Then the paper is dipped in the blood of the dog and buried near the person who is being bewitched. (1) Meanwhile /53/ the böm-bu is reading aloud from the sacred books in his tent. It is not possible, however, by means of magic to turn men into animals

1. In China we also find that cursed objects intended to bring ill luck through black magic are buried. For example, if a woman does not wish her neighbor well, she tries to gain possession of a few of her neighbor's hairs which she brings to an old woman versed in black magic and making a business of it. With the help of incantations, the old woman can make the hairs work an evil spell, for example, produce trachoma or boils. However, in order to be effective, the hairs must be secretly placed under the chamber pot (ma-t'ung) of the victim.

and vice versa, as I was told several times in China.

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If a person believes, on the other hand, that he has fallen ill because of magic, he first lets a lama prophesy who has cast the spell. Then the person lies in wait for the enchanter and shoots him. My interpreter who spent a long time with the nomad Mewu-Fantzu, had never experienced such cases himself, but had only heard tell of them. However, he maintained that he knew of several cases of revenge on alleged sorcerers among the sedentary Fantzu with whom he lived at the time. Laymen can protect themselves from magic spells not only by availing themselves of the magic powers of böm-bu and lamas, but also by practicing magic themselves. Any layman who fears magic spells can read in the sacred writings if he is able to read at all. A layman can protect himself against misfortune, as for example sickness or cattle epidemics, by means of magic.

Strangers are, of course, particularly subject to suspicion. Thus my interpreter learned that after I had come to live near the encampment of the Mewu-Fantzu, they wondered whether an abnormally heavy rain lasting for several days might have been caused by my visit. The people, particularly the men (?), were by no means happy over my visit, especially in the beginning. But not only Europeans are affected by this superstition; it is directed also against Chinese and Mohammedans and even Tibetans from the lowlands. The nomads dislike particularly being photographed or having people make sketches or draw maps. The stranger, especially of course the European, is highly suspect because of his unusual appearance and his strange customs. This viewpoint is, however, only human, and by no means characteristic of Tibetans alone. I found it throughout China; and it has been my experience over a period of many years that every /54/ slightly unusual event that coincides with the arrival of a stranger is only too easily regarded as having been caused by the stranger, no matter whether I traveled in the extreme northwestern part of China among Tibetans, or in the extreme southeast among the Li on the island of Hainan, or somewhere in between, in China proper. (1)

1. Compare, for example, C. Bell 10), page 207; Stübel 11), Hainan-Li, page 61, 113, 241; Stübel 12), Yao, page 377. Since I always traveled in summer, and thus at the time of the great rains, I was not at all surprised that the rainstorm was regarded by the Fantzu as being connected with my arrival. I had the same experience, for example, with a Yao tribe in northern

186 Kuangtung, where my guide, a Chinese from the neighborhood, was heartily reproached for having brought the rain-bringing stranger. The poor man was soundly thrashed even by his Chinese fellow citizens after he returned to his own village.

[75] The customs observed to ward off or eliminate misfortune or invoke good fortune are a hodgepodge of ideas taken from popular religion and Lamaism. Both religions exist side by side in the religious world of the people, just as the böm-bu have taken over Lamaistic customs and vice versa.

Such customs may be magic practices in the widest sense, linked with all kinds of superstition; they can be prayers, sacrifices or oracles. Amulets are favorite magic symbols; they are preferably made by lamas and consecrated by magic formulas spoken over them. When we described the ornaments of the Fantzu we spoke of the rosaries and the small, square or round boxes worn on the chest and containing sacred objects of the Lamaist. These are worn throughout a lifetime, especially when there are unusual dangers, as for example, war. They are often presented to the laymen by lamas.

/55/ Small strips of silk tied around the throat are worn as amulets. The amulet boxes worn on the chest contain, for example, magic writings of an incarnation, bits of clothing, nail parings, hair or remnants of sacrifice of an incarnation, even his excrement; also pills which are made by the incarnation and which are given as a present if one kowtows to the incarnation. These pills may also be kept in the tent in front of the family altar. It is believed that after a month or more small pills originate from the initial large one, and that these can protect the body from all kinds of diseases. Small scraps of clothing of an incarnation are known as nam-sa, the pills, mani-je-la.

I was unable to get any information about special superstitions relating to unerring marksmanship or imperviousness to bullets. However, I learned of a symbolic act of magic to ward off the threat of war or bring about victory. During my stay among the Mewu-Fantzu (late summer of 1936) they were very much afraid of the Communist army which was at that time on its famous march to the north. In the large lamasery of He-tso I observed that hundreds of small figures were being made of a mixture of water, barley flour and butter and that these were painted red.

They were about 10 centimeters high and were shaped somewhat like 751
a tripod, pointed at the top. When I asked the meaning of these figures I got no clear answer. But later I was told that these figures were supposed to represent dead Communists. Symbolic corpses such as these are called lon-ma. Armed warriors gathered in the temple and while the lamas read prayers, they made threatening gestures with their weapons in the direction from which the Communists were expected, and struck the "corpses" symbolically. This magic performance is staged before every war.

Not only people protect themselves with the help of amulets; the latter are also used to protect animals. If the Fantzu are /56/ worried about the health of a horse, they tie a bunch of ribbons on its mane. They buy the ribbons from a lama who makes them efficacious by means of magic formulas. The sacred yaks and sheep are protected in the same way. The ribbons must be of five different colors: red, yellow, green, blue, and white. They are cotton or silk, depending on the wealth of the owner.

It was my impression that, apart from the belief in obos, the 787
magic influence of the configuration of the earth's surface and the distribution of water, the thing the Chinese call feng-shui, does not seem as important to the tent nomads as it does in China. The feng-shui is judged only by the lamas, for example, when a tent-site is being selected. It is considered unlucky to pitch a tent opposite the main gate of a house, a thing that can happen if one is traveling in the region of the sedentary Fantzu. The most important protection for a tent is the prayer flag. Within the tent people are careful that they do not step over the hearth when they pass from one section of the room to the other. I learned nothing about special superstitions connected with eating or traveling.

The oft-mentioned reading aloud of sacred writings by bŏm-bu [782]
lamas or laymen may be called prayer. Important forms of prayer 788
are also telling one's beads, and prayer flags and prayer wheels which are specifically Lamaistic. Beads can be counted any time one happens to have a hand free. In almost every tent there is also a hand prayer wheel (1) which usually lies on the altar when it is

1. Rockhill 1), page 738 f.

not in use. It is turned morning and evening by both men and women. One seldom finds stationary wheels that are turned by hand. Among the tent Fantzu I did not see any prayer wheels turned by water power or by

the wind, as I did among the sedentary Fantzu. On the other hand, prayer flags (2) were used a great deal. In front of most tents there

2. Rockhill 1), page 739.

is a mast from which as /57/ a rule two lines are suspended adorned with prayer flags. In cases of illness or other misfortunes the people visit a lama in a monastery and ask his advice. The lama may then recommend the use of a prayer flag which is printed by the lama, usually free of charge.

We must also mention the fact that lamas are called upon to influence the weather by means of prayer, especially when there is too much rainfall or a drought. In that case the lama comes to the tent encampment and pitches his own tent, in which he reads sacred writings.

I did not learn anything among the tent Fantzu about special customs to keep off thunderstorms. The sedentary Fantzu leave it to the lamas to ward off thunderstorms.

[821] Earthquakes are considered a punishment for the wickedness of human beings. When there are eclipses of the sun and moon the people pray, as they do so often, simultaneously with lips, rosary and prayer wheels, and burn juniper wood.

Laymen as well as lamas and böm-bu offer sacrifices to ward off evil influences. On the 1st, 8th, 15th and 29th of each month they burn incense in front of the tent. This custom is observed particularly after a death, in order to propitiate the spirits of the ancestors. Morning and evening they burn dwarf juniper and remnants of yak dung. At the same time they set out a brass cup with sacrificial water, as well as butter and tsamba. The sedentary Fantzu have special altars for this purpose made of loam; the tent Fantzu burn their offering on the ground. There are also sacrifices made chiefly to Dzam-la (Ts'ai-shen, the god of wealth) whose statuette stands on the family altar. They place three bowls to the left and four to the right of this statuette, and these are filled every morning with fresh water, just as those in front of a Buddha statue. After the noon meal the bowls are emptied and stacked.

/58/ Sacrifices are made to the ami (mountain spirit) on all sorts of occasions, chiefly to ward off evil, and darts and "khadaks"(1)

1. The "khadak," a silk scarf, is an important object of the religious and social life of the Tibetans.

Mewv

In its simplest form it consists of a strip of thin, light-blue silk one meter long and about 30 centimeters wide, imported from Szechuan (Ch'eng-tu). It is used as an offering, like the obo, especially in the Lamaistic religion, as for example, for an incarnation whose blessing one implores. A khadak is always an appropriate and polite gift.

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are used. Offerings include khadaks, darts (for the obo), juniper wood, barley flour, tsamba, butter, sacrificial water in brass bowls, as well as sacrificial paper which, as in China, is burned. Pictures are stamped on the sacrificial paper, for example, a horse surrounded by the symbols of the "eight treasures." (2) Offerings are also made

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2. Compare Wadell 7), page 393.

to the mountain spirit before a hunt, especially when the animals to be hunted are hard to capture, for example, musk deer or gazelles. This offering is made on top of the tent, and consists of juniper wood, butter and tsamba. There is another sacrificial rite when war threatens, which undoubtedly goes back to pre-Lamaistic times, and at which lamas are never present. The warriors gather at a place agreed upon and slit open with a knife the belly of a yak, a sheep or a goat. The animal is then cast alive on a fire of yak dung and burned to death along with tsamba and butter.

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The sacred animals which wealthy people sacrifice to the spirits can probably also be regarded as offerings. For this purpose they always choose a male animal (yak or sheep), but it /59/ may also be castrated. These animals which are kept in the owner's herd may not be shorn or slaughtered; they are allowed to die a natural death. Since people are very much concerned about keeping them well and alive for a long time, they often decorate them with the above-mentioned bundles of colored ribbons blessed by the lamas. (1)

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1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 49.

Oracles and prophecies are sought preferably from the lamas. People value them differently. We have spoken above how the nomads ask a lama to prophesy for them with regard to the driving out of spirits, in order to ascertain whether in a given case this can best be done by a lama or a bŏm-bu. They also let a lama prophesy how to trace a criminal. The lama may say whether and

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787 when the crime can be discovered and in what direction one must
792 travel to capture the criminal.

The strange blend of folk religion and Buddhism or Lamaism is
177 expressed very clearly, for example, in the ideas which the Mewu-
771 Fantzu have about life after death. On the one hand, they worship their ancestors, and apparently believe that the souls of these dwell in some form near the tent, since that is where offerings are regularly presented; and they also fear the evil spirits into which the souls of people having died a violent death are transformed. On the other hand, the Buddhist belief in transmigration of souls, whereby the soul can be reborn as a human being or animal, is commonly accepted. Thus our above description of the odd fear of the Mewu-Fantzu chieftain that the soul of his brother may have entered a groundhog, and his subsequent decree that groundhogs were not to be shot, was probably based on the confused blend of a belief in the transmigration of souls and in the danger of spirits of human beings who have died a violent death.

353 /60/ The cult at the family altar belongs primarily to Lamaistic
778 religion. In every tent the altar is on the right (male) side, at an
177 elevation of 1/2 meter above the ground, behind the hearth and next to the place where the fuel is piled up. It is a simple, rectangular wooden box that is 1/2 meter high, 40 centimeters deep and 1 1/2 meters long. In the middle of the altar there stands a small brass statue of Buddha, with three larger and three smaller bowls of water to the left, and four larger and four smaller ones to the right. These bowls are supposed to correspond to holes in the heart of Buddha. On the family altar of a böm-bu there are, as we have said, also prayer books, a large Chinese brush and a row of copper coins.

262 The numerous food taboos go back to Buddhist influence. The
177 Fantzu abstain altogether from eating the meat of horses, mules, donkeys and dogs, all fowl and fish, as well as eggs. At present the meat of groundhogs is also forbidden (1). They eat the meat

1. also pork, see above, page 25.

of sheep and yaks, but these animals are not killed in the ordinary way; they are strangled, and thus the crime of shedding blood is avoided.

782 Prayer runs through the entire daily life of the Fantzu. It is usually limited to the Lamaistic formula: "Omi mani padme hum." This they mumble especially while fingering their beads and if

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possible while turning the prayer wheel which contains the same formula. The prayer is also written on the prayer flags which are found beside every tent. The lama reads prayers for special purposes, as for example, healing the sick. At festivals laymen together with lamas repeat common prayers. 782

Lamaistic ideas are probably also essentially responsible for the strange funeral rites of the Fantzu. In the vicinity of each lamasery there are two different elevated burial sites, one for lamas and one for laymen. Immediately /61/ following death the naked corpse is tied up in a squatting position and covered with a new felt coat. A person buys the coat himself or is presented with it by his son or a close relative when he gets old. The corpse is tied together not by the relatives but by three men from the neighborhood. The relatives are not present when this is done. The bound corpse is laid either behind the curtain at the entrance to the tent or on the altar box. The next morning before daybreak the three neighbors who have tied the corpse together arrive, carry the corpse out of the tent and tie it on a horse or yak. They lead it thus to the burial place, taking along tea, tsamba, butter and mo-mo (bread). At the burial place they make a pile of yak dung about a foot high, and place on it a small portion of the food offerings which they burn as a sacrifice. The corpse is laid somewhat below the burnt offering. The greater portion of the food that has been brought along is eaten by the three men who have transported the corpse to the burial place, or else it is given to the beggars who have congregated at the site. One of the three men gets the felt coat in which the deceased was wrapped, as a reward. Only food offerings are made if the deceased is a male, and they consist of a little barley and oats which are placed beside the corpse. Women get cheap ornaments in addition, and these are laid beside the corpse. They are sometimes stolen by Chinese, but never by Fantzu. Only the three who have attended the corpse go to the burial place, and sometimes also beggars who are, however, very rare in the territory of the Fantzu. The corpse and the burnt offerings attract vultures, and it is usually only a few hours before they appear. The attendants remain at the burial place until the vultures have consumed the corpse, which as a rule happens very quickly, since many birds gather. (1) If the vultures do not devour 764 177

1. The alertness of the vultures is amazing. For days one may not see any at all or only one or two, whereas a sudden flock of them is usually a sure indication that a funeral is taking place.

764 the corpse, /62/ attendants cut it up with a knife, severing the limbs
177 at the joints. Any kind of knife is used for this purpose; afterwards it is washed off a bit and used for other things. The various parts of the corpse are thrown in all directions so that they will be devoured by the vultures. The bones, such as skull, jaws, upper thigh bones, are left at the burial place. Many bones are disposed of by vultures.

While this is going on at the burial place, the relatives and lamas (usually only two of the latter) gather in the tent of mourning. Here the lamas read prayers. The family of the deceased prepares a large meal of which the lamas partake. The food consists of tsamba, butter, mo-mo and meat cooked with rice. After the meal tsamba and butter are divided among the relatives. The lamas get the better clothing of the deceased and they in turn give them to their relatives. The lamas continue to read prayers from breakfast until noon and even while people eat. Sometime after the death has occurred, the family gives butter, barley flour and money to the lamasery to which the lamas belong. Wealthy people give each lama $14, a pound (chin) of butter and a bushel (tou) of barley flour. Poor people give each lama only 10 cents; very poor ones give nothing.

Five or six years after the day of mourning the same ceremonies are performed. This custom is perhaps based on the same ideas that underlie the widespread second burial in South China. No special mourning clothes are worn. The Fantzu do not join in official loud weeping as the Chinese do at their funerals; it is only at the funeral feast that they weep softly now and then "to be polite and to show one's sympathy."

A child's funeral does not differ from that of an adult.

If someone has died a violent death, no special customs are observed. Nor is there any difference in the case of suicide. However, this form of death seems to be rare. /63/ My interpreter knew of only two cases of suicides by hanging among the Mewu-Fantzu.

After a death has occurred the Fantzu request an incarnation (fu-yeh) to carry out a ceremony to insure the rebirth of the soul in a human being, not an animal ("scatter flowers rice," tsou hua mi). The fu-yeh strews grains of barley all over the tent to form flower-like figures (Tibetan: dzam-na). A pointed trivet is made of tsamba and is a symbol of the dead. It is also strewn with barley corn by the fu-yeh. A member of the family or a neighbor carries the symbol of the dead out of the tent and throws it away not far

from the tent. For this ceremony the fu-yeh is presented with two yaks, two sheep and the good clothing of the deceased, depending on the wealth of the relatives. Poor people often give only a small remuneration.

In the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu there are three lamaseries, the Old and the New Mewu Lamasery (Mewu-chiu-szu, Mewu-hsin-szu) and Lao-do-ma, all of which are under the jurisdiction of the large Labrang Lamasery. Most of the lamas at these places come from among the Mewu-Fantzu. (1) However, there are also some

1. According to Ekvall 4), page 31, about every third man among the Fantzu is a lama.

Chinese lamas, mostly people who were impoverished as a result of the Mohammedan uprisings in the 17th and 21st years of the Republic (1928 and 1932). There are more Chinese among the lamas in He-tso farther down and in Labrang, and still more in Kumbum, the famous lamasery of western Tibet. According to my interpreter, Chinese lamas are superior to Tibetan lamas, probably because of the mere fact that they can read Chinese as well as Tibetan.

The lamaseries have their own pasturelands. They do not keep sheep, only yaks, which they have the young lamas tend. There are no regular taxes collected for the lamaseries, but they are provided with necessary food, most of which is donated at the temple festivals. If a family has a relative who is a lama, it provides him regularly with /64/ food. Surplus flour and butter are always sent to the lamasery by people who have a son there. Families connected with the lamaseries take turns defraying the expenses for the temple festivals and supplying the necessary food for these occasions. Lamas also often come to the tents to ask for food, especially butter. A typical picture of nomad life is to see a lama riding from tent to tent for this purpose. These lamas sometimes also come from lamaseries that do not belong to Mewu-Fantzu territory. An incarnation wearing a golden hat and a red silk sash usually rides at the head of the procession, followed by a few lamas in white hats and one or two mounted laymen who keep off the dogs. When such a group of riders stops in front of a tent the inmates come out, chain the dogs and kowtow to the incarnation, who blesses them for it by touching them with a piece of white cloth. This ceremony brings luck. I was under the impression that the people enjoyed giving the lama of their surplus butter.

792 Let us summarize what we have said about the function of the lamas in the everyday religious life of the nomads: the lamas exorcise the evil spirits, above all the wicked souls of the dead who bring sickness to man and beast. People come to the lamas to receive amulets as a protection against diseases of men and animals, and prayer flags to protect the tent. Lamas are also requested to exorcise unfavorable weather by reading prayers aloud. Only the lamas can judge feng-shui, i.e., the magical influence of the various aspects of landscape on the life of man. As far as I could ascertain, feng-shui does not count as much among the Fantzu as it does among the Chinese.

At festivals, some of which are celebrated by individual families in their tents, others in the lamaseries, the lamas must recite prayers; likewise on other occasions, for example, to fend off threats of war. The lamas are also consulted when a child is given a name one or two months after birth. But first and foremost the lamas are asked to help in sickness in order to determine by casting dice whether it would be more advantageous to have a lama or a böm-bu exorcise the evil spirit. They are paid a small sum of money for carrying out such exorcisms. If one wants to apprehend a criminal, a lama is asked to prophesy whether the crime can be discovered and when, and in what direction one must travel in order to capture the criminal. A lama is also consulted if it is believed that an illness was caused by magic. The lama prophesies who has cast the spell.

Aside from all these "religious" functions, a lama's aid is also sought in everyday life when /65/ on any occasion a layman's education is not adequate. Thus if a man closes an important business deal, he asks a lama to help him make out the bill. Most important of all, the scholarly lamas calculate the Chinese calendar for the people, and post it on the lamasery gate.

The incarnations have a special significance in the religious life of a lamasery. In Chinese they are known as Huo-fu (Living Buddha), in Kansu mostly fu-yeh, in Tibetan (Mewu-Fantzu) A-le-ha. (1) In Mewu-chiu-szu and Lao-do-ma there are two

1. Compare L. A. Wadell 7), page 229 ff. on incarnations.

fu-yeh, in Mewu-hsin-szu, one. The fu-yeh are sent from Labrang to these temples. They need not come originally from the region of the Mewu-Fantzu. My interpreter could not remember that there was ever a fu-yeh found among the Mewu-Fantzu. He

maintained that origin was not important in the selection of a fu-yeh, and that the fu-yeh were not predominantly chosen from the families of tribal chieftains or other influential families. In his opinion, the fu-yeh were honestly chosen. The common people have the following to say on the subject: Shortly before his death the fu-yeh tells his confidant (kuan-chia) in what region he will be reborn. If he does not mention a specific region or says that he will be reborn only after a few years, the kuan-chia consults the great incarnation at Labrang who figures out when and where the fu-yeh will be reborn. The kuan-chia takes the deceased fu-yeh's horse-whip and his wooden tsamba bowl edged with silver, and betakes himself into the region indicated by the deceased himself or by the incarnation in Labrang, in order to find the child in which the deceased is reborn. He gives the bowl and the whip to a number of children who he thinks may be the incarnation. If a child accepts the objects, it is the true incarnation who then is presented with khadaks (silk scarfs) and pulu (Tibetan woolen material) by the kuan-chia. The child is usually 4 to 8 years old. The kuan-chia then negotiates about the price to be paid the parents of the fu-yeh for /66/ the child. It amounts to several hundred dollars, a few horses and yaks. Often, however, the parents forgo compensation because they consider it an honor to have a fu-yeh in their family. The inhabitants of the region in which the fu-yeh was found form a cortege which accompanies him to the lamasery he is to enter, and the lamas from there come to meet him. A fu-yeh is never dismissed because he proves unsuitable. No one doubts the divinatory discovery of the fu-yeh.

The great importance of the fu-yeh for the lamasery itself as well as for the religious life of the layman is evident if we consider the fact mentioned above that each lamasery has a corresponding obo on a sacred mountain, and that the spirit (ami) dwelling in the obo is thought of as mystically connected with one of the lamasery incarnations who, in turn, corresponds to a Buddha or Bodhisattva.

The high esteem which the fu-yeh enjoys among the people gives him a special place in judicial matters: a convicted thief must pay a lama two or three times the indemnity that a layman can command, but a fu-yeh must be paid nine times the amount if he is robbed. At New Year, offerings are made to the ami at the obo, and on the fourth day of the year a festival is held at the lamaseries, which the laymen attend and at which fireworks are set off in honor of the former fu-yeh. The Tibetan regards it as a special reward for a sinless life to be reborn as a fu-yeh some day, although he

792 does not realize that this view contradicts the essential nature of an incamation. As we said above, people like to give butter to the fu-yeh if he rides to the tent encampment personally to request food for the lamasery. We have also mentioned the fact that when death occurs in a family the fu-yeh must conduct a special rite in the tent of the deceased so that he will not be reborn as an animal but as a human being.

796 /67/ All festivals of the Tibetans, except weddings and part of the New Year's festival, are religious. There are four yearly festivals in the lamaseries: from the 1st to the 15th of the first month, from the 15th to the 25th of the fifth month, from the 1st to the 15th of the eighth month, and from the 15th to the 25th of the tenth month, according to the Chinese calendar. There are no other religious festivals, with the exception of the festival known as "speaking and sitting still." No religious festivals are celebrated in the tents. However, while the lamasery festivals are going on or shortly thereafter, people invite friends and relatives to their tent. The laymen bring meat, wine and money to the festivals as gifts for the lamasery; no gifts are brought when people are invited into the tents. The wine is drunk only by the laymen, never by lamas. At the New Year festival, which as a rule lasts a fortnight, feasts are usually prepared in the tents, but only on the first three days. This festival was formerly more simple among the Fantzu, but has been influenced by the Chinese. On the morning of New Year's day they burn cypress wood as a sacrifice to the mountain spirits. On the fourth day of the year everybody from the tents goes to the lamasery, where a large feast is given - consisting mostly of mo-mo and butter - and fireworks are set off in honor of the deceased fu-yeh. At the same time a festival is held on the obo mountain to invoke the ami. Butter, tea, mutton and cypress wood are offered. At the New Year's feasts in the tents, beef, mutton and pork are eaten - in fact, pork is eaten only at New Year - as well as butter, a kind of bread made of unroasted barley flour, pastry baked in oil and tsamba. In addition they buy bean-flour noodles, carrots and cabbage in Ho-chou, the nearest large Mohammedan commercial city north of Labrang. If the family is wealthy they also eat pao-tzu (tarts) filled with garlic, similar to Italian ravioli, which are popular all over North China as well. Noodles and mo-mo (Chinese bread) are also served exclusively at New Year and on other festive occasions. If possible, they drink wine.

Mewu

/67a/ Besides the above-described festivals, the niu-na festival 796
is held annually in summer, but only among the tent nomads of the Mewu tribe. The name of the festival means "sitting still and talking." The site of the festival, a shallow valley in the grasslands with steep, pointed limestone peaks in the background, is always the same. The time of the festival is determined each year by the Mewu-hsin-szu Lamasery. The festival honors the spirits to insure the health of livestock throughout the year; prayers are offered for favorable wind and sufficient rain. There is no special sacrifice offered. The festival lasts five days. At least one or two persons, usually more, from each family - men and women, old people and youngsters - participate. Each family is required to send at least one representative. If they fail to do so, they must pay a fine. Only about 20 to 30 people arrive on the first day to erect the tents for the participants which stand along the edge of the circular festival grounds. The area measures about 100 meters in diameter. There is also a beautiful rectangular temple tent in which the lamas say their prayers. It is decorated with a tri-colored cloth frieze and black ornaments. Inside hang Lamaistic images of saints; an altar has also been erected. Next to the temple tent there are two larger tents which serve as the community kitchen. The tents of most of the participants are made of the customary coarse black tent cloth. Only the wealthy people pitch small, white tents of the type the lamas use on their travels. Most of the participants arrive on the second day. They do not eat anything in the morning, only drink something. Toward noon as large a meal as possible is served: tsamba, butter, mo-mo, rice, sour milk; but no wine. The main dishes are mo-mo baked in oil and butter. The meal lasts one or two hours because enough must be eaten for two days. Mo-mo or flat, soft rolls about 30 centimeters in diameter are baked on a large common hearth. The ingredients for this, wheat flour and rape oil purchased in Labrang or Ho-chou, are collected from all the tents. The mo-mo are equally distributed among all the participants. When they /68/ eat, men and women sit on the ground in two rows facing each other. The inmates of one tent, 7 to 10 persons, sit together. After the meal they fast and are silent for the rest of the day. On the third day of the festival they do not eat and do not talk; only prayers are mumbled by men and women. On the fourth day there is again a large meal, but otherwise no one eats or converses. On the fifth day the conduct is the same as on the third: fasting, prayer, silence. On the sixth day the festival breaks up. I visited it on the

796 fourth day, and my impression was that the participants were in a very quiet, dull and somewhat sleepy mood. The festival is conducted by the lamas of the Mewu lamaseries, more than half of whom attend. The chieftain does not come regularly himself, but always sends members of his family. The participants arrive in their Sunday-best, their costumes often being magnificent. The women wear red silk tassels on their conical felt hats. You see a great many purple and scarlet silk jackets with gay collars; red, purple and figured pulu coats; rich hair ornaments of silver and gold. The middle section of the gala hair ornaments of the young girls is decorated with silvery bands of tin. The women's furs are often trimmed with a bias band of cloth that looks like a skirt and is edged with otter fur or colored cloth. Everyone brings along his best saddles and bridles, often mounted with silver. You see many showy weapons, guns with silver-mounted stocks and swords in choice sheaths. The women also wear beautiful knives in their belts.

/69/ Social Life

551/563 The Mewu-Fantzu are said to have surnames (hsing), a custom which they have taken over from the Chinese, probably only a short time ago for it was not customary among the Fantzu, and the surname is not used in conversation. (1) According to an ancient

1. According to Ekvall 4), page 42, the Amdo-Tibetans have only given names; Rockhill 1), page 724, says the same.

custom, a child is given a name by a lama when it is one or two months old. This name-giving is not connected with a special festival. An adult is usually given a nickname by his friends, which refers to a special characteristic or event, for example, "imperfection," "deformed." I have no information about a change of name as a result of marriage. People with the same surname may marry, likewise relatives, all except brothers and sisters. Thus cousins may marry or a nephew may marry his aunt on either side of the family, or a son may marry the divorced wife of his father. Couples from the same neighborhood or from outlying areas are free to marry, but not those of special tent encampments or special families.

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The marriage age as a rule is between the 15th and 18th year. 581
There is considerable sexual intercourse before marriage, but a 792
couple marries when a child is born. There are love matches and matches arranged by a third person who even in the case of marriage for love, is sent by the young man to the family of his beloved. If there is only one son, he becomes a lama, if there are two sons, the older one stays at home and the younger becomes a lama; often all the sons except the first-born enter a lamasery. It even happens that all the sons join a lamasery. In that case, or if there is no son, a son-in-law must be adopted. These sons-in-law are as a rule ex-lamas who did not like the life of the lamasery. Thus there is /70/ always a shortage of eligible males, and yet there are no older unmarried women. Polygyny is uncommon, except among very wealthy people. Polyandry which occurs in parts of Tibet is not customary among the Mewu-Fantzu. The sons who become lamas are sent into the lamasery when they are 8 to 10 years old.

Among the Mewu-Fantzu the tent nomads and the sedentary 563
Fantzu intermarry. It is, however, said to be more distinctive for 581
a tent nomad to marry a woman from a resident family. (1) She likes

1. This statement of my interpreter contradicts what Ekvall 4), page 76, says, namely, that the nomads are always more highly esteemed than the sedentary Fantzu.

to go into a tent, provided her husband has means. Conversely a sedentary Fantzu can marry a nomad woman without being discredited. There are also marriagesbetween Chinese and Mohammedans on the one hand and nomads on the other. A Chinese or a Mohammedan may marry a nomad woman, but a man who is a nomad may not marry a Chinese woman because she does not understand the work a nomad woman has to perform. A family of nomads gains in social standing if a Chinese man marries a woman of the family. Hence the nomads do not always demand a marriage fee from the Chinese, at any rate not a large one. Usually the Chinese man is obliged to give only a yak. The Mongols living in the province of Kansu have no contact with the Mewu-Fantzu.

If it is a love match, neither the parents nor other relatives have 583
any influence in the choice of a man. The wedding gift is paid in yaks, and consists of one to five yaks, depending on the wealth of the man's family. If a son-in-law is adopted, the family of the girl must give the family of the man one or two yaks, provided the son does not come from a family living away, in which case nothing

585 /71/ The wedding celebration varies according to whether the woman marries into the man's family or whether a son-in-law is adopted. In the former instance she rides to the tent of the man on the wedding day, wearing a new dark or light-blue cotton coat (seldom a red one) over her fur coat. She is accompanied by the go-between, her sisters, and young men and women from the neighborhood. When they arrive at the tent of the man, there are no particular ceremonies as in Chinese weddings, where fireworks are set off and musicians blow their horns. The bride is received in front of the tent by a neighbor of the bridegroom who does not himself come out of the tent. These people have not adopted any Chinese marriage ceremonies, such as kowtowing to the parents-in-law, to the ancestors, and to heaven and earth. The woman with her attendants enters the left (female) side of the tent, the male attendants enter the right side. After the bride has arrived, a sumptuous wedding feast begins, which lasts from morning to evening and is shared by the relatives of the bridegroom and those of the bride who have accompanied her. For the wedding feast the relatives of the bride bring wine and money. At this feast, the men, of course, again sit on the right side of the tent, the women on the left. During the feast they occasionally sing, but they do not play any instruments nor do they dance. The food consists chiefly of mo-mo baked in butter, meat and tsamba, with wine to drink. I did not learn of any other wedding customs. Unfortunately, I had no opportunity to be present at a wedding.

When the bridegroom is adopted into the family of the bride, his future father-in-law fetches him from the tent of his family. The bridegroom's relatives accompany him to the tent of his adopted parents or parents-in-law. His father-in-law presents him with a gun, a horse and a pulu coat. /72/ The feast is the same as the one we described above, except that the relatives of the bride give no money or presents at the wedding feast.

846 Directly after the birth of a child, the woman goes to the nearest brook to fetch a tub of water which, as usual, she carries home on her back, in the belief that carrying a heavy burden is [844] beneficial to her health. She often does not have any kind of help during childbirth. The baby is not washed after birth. The mother may not eat sour milk or anything cold; she must drink sweet, warm milk and if possible eat only good cooked mutton. If the father has time, he helps his wife prepare meals during the first few days; otherwise he need not observe any particular customs.

The woman does not receive special callers. The Fantzu are equally 846
glad over the birth of a boy or a girl, because the girl can later
bring an adopted son into the household. There are no festivals after
a child is born; nor is there any kind of initiation ceremonies when 862
a youth reaches maturity.

Most of the work is done exclusively by the women. The men 462
pay each other visits - on horseback or on foot - and chat, the main
subject of conversation being the choice of pasturelands. The young
people are entrusted with the tending of the animals. The girls are
also required to gather yak dung for fuel. This work is also done by
the older women, but never by the men. The wives of the nomads
never go out to work as do the wives of the sedentary Fantzu, because
they are too busy taking care of the animals and the dairy.

The woman always has a decisive voice within the family, re- 562
gardless of whether her husband was adopted by her family or whether 593
she married into the family of her husband. In commercial deals, for
example, the woman has the final decision; the man /73/ if possi-
ble asks her approval before concluding any business transaction. It
can even happen that the woman beats her husband, but married
couples also beat each other. Relatives cannot interfere in a marriage.
If young married couples quarrel with their parents-in-law, they
move into another tent. In other cases three generations live in one
tent. There can be as many as 10 inhabitants of a tent, but the
average number is four - parents and two children. If a couple can- 586
not get along, the t'ou-mu[1] gives the verdict at the divorce proceed-
ings.

After the death of his wife, a man can remarry immediately, 587
provided he has the necessary means; a widow can also remarry at 428
once. Orphans are taken in by the grandparents, if possible, or by
the nearest relatives. If his wife dies, a man keeps his children,
provided the wife has married into his family. If a man dies who
was adopted into the wife's family, the children remain with her
family, even though the family of a widow should adopt a second
husband for her. If the widow of an adopted husband marries into
another family, the children of the first marriage remain in the
maternal family.

If a man dies who was adopted as a son-in-law by a family,
the latter tries to find a new husband for the widow and a new son-
in-law as soon as possible. He then inherits the property of the
first husband, but must also take over the duties of providing for
the children of the first marriage. If the woman cannot soon marry

[1] [t'ou-mu = tribal chieftain -- Analyst]

587 a man by adoption, or if she marries into another family, her grown
428 son, rather than herself, is the heir. She herself has no right to the personal fortune of her deceased husband, even if she has no grown son. The property of her husband is distributed equally among relatives and neighbors of the deceased, under the chieftain's supervision; or the fu-yeh of the lamasery /74/ in the district in which the deceased lived inherits the property, which he re-sells if he cannot use it himself. The personal property of a deceased mother is divided equally among her daughters and daughters-in-law. If there are no female survivors, it is sold and the proceeds go to the nearest relatives.

631 The territory of the Mewu-Fantzu was formerly part of the Tibetan province of Amdo which became the provinces of Ch'inghai and Kansu. We still use the word Amdo for the region that lies west of the pasturelands of the Mewu-Fantzu. Formerly the territory was governed from the old part of the city of T'ao-chou. After the district of Hsia-ho was founded 10 years ago, it came under that administration. The district city of Hsia-ho developed from the market town that sprang up next to Labrang Lamasery. The Fantzu who belong to the Labrang Lamasery are called Na-fan-örl-she-si-tsu, Tibetan: Labrang gomba (meaning "temple") chala-diebu, and the Mewu-Fantzu are a tribe originating from these. It is said that a total of 108 lamaseries are subordinate to the great incarnation at Labrang. Only three of these are in the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu.

643 At the head of the Mewu-Fantzu is a tribal chieftain known as t'ou-mu, sometimes also t'u-szu; he has the title of Mewu-huan-pu. There are said to be 150 tent encampments under his jurisdiction, as well as the sedentary Mewu-Fantzu. A tent encampment consists of 10 to 40 tents. These figures seem very high to me, considering the extremely sparse settlement of the Mewu-Fantzu territory.

648 The t'ou-mu of the Mewu tribe is responsible to the Chinese district official (hsien-chang) of Hsia-ho in administrative matters, to the Huang-szu-ling (which may be roughly translated "General Huang"), i.e., the present t'u-szu of Labrang, in military matters, and to the Labrang Lamasery in religious matters.

"Huang-szu-ling" is the "t'u-szu" (feudal lord) of a large area, to which that of the Mewu-Fantzu belongs. Even after the fall of the Manchu Dynasty, the t'u-szu maintained considerable independence in the /75/ Chinese-governed border areas inhabited by non-Chinese peoples (Tibetans, Lolo, Tai). Taxes were paid to the t'u-szu, and in case of war they could recruit soldiers from their

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region. Originally the Chinese government played the role of the highest liege lord, since the t'u-szu had to pay taxes to it and lend assistance in war. The Chinese government installed the t'u-szu in office, that is to say, it gave the t'u-szu family its domain to a certain extent as an hereditary feudal possession. The Huang-szu-ling was installed only 7 or 8 years ago (that is, about 1928) by the Chinese government. His family, known for its war-like (or rather marauding) enterprises, comes from the province of Hsik'ang, south of Kansu. It is characteristic for the intellectual and social attitude of a feudal society that the highest incarnation of the great Labrang Lamasery is a brother of the Huang-szu-ling. The independence of the Huang-szu-ling was very much curtailed by the Chinese government, especially in the organization of the district of Hsia-ho. The Mewu-Fantzu henceforth do not have to pay their taxes to the Huang-szu-ling, but the t'ou-mu and his sub-chiefs transfer the taxes they collect directly to the Chinese district officials.

One of the lamaseries - Mewu-hsin-szu or new Mewu lamasery - in the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu is directly under the administration of the t'ou-mu. The territory of Mewu-chiu-szu - old Mewu lamasery - is under the administration of three sub-chiefs. The territory of Lao-da-ma is under two sub-chiefs, one of whom has a higher rank than all the rest. Sedentary Fantzu as well as tent nomads are also under the administration of the sub-chiefs.

The t'ou-mu lives alternately in a regular house situated between He-tso and Mewu-hsin-szu, or in a tent. The latter is not different from the tents of other Fantzu. The t'ou-mu has a representative in each of the three lamaseries in his area, and he sometimes lives with them. The office of the t'ou-mu is hereditary from father to eldest son. If the son is not suited to the position, the /76/ father has the right to name a son that is more qualified as his successor. If the t'ou-mu has no sons, his adopted son-in-law becomes his successor. A definite number of families are under the administration of a chief and his five sub-chiefs. Each of these families has a right to five definite pasture areas. There are no marriage restrictions within the group of families governed by a t'ou-mu. The t'ou-mu must see to it that people from a strange tribe under no circumstances pasture their animals in the region under his jurisdiction. He has more than ten officials (Chinese: kuan-shih) who are laymen, and in addition the above-mentioned representatives in the lamaseries. They, too, are known as kuan-shih, but are lamas. Their task, among other things, is to welcome lamasery guests. There are no particular office-holders apart from the t'ou-mu, his five sub-chiefs

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643 and the kuan-shih. Since the t'ou-mu does not speak Chinese, he
624 has a Chinese secretary to deal with the district officials, with whom he communicates through an interpreter. The t'ou-mu appoints the kuan-shih and discharges them if they are not qualified. The kuan-shih are not paid. Everyone is obliged to accept the post of kuan-shih if appointed by the t'ou-mu. Length of office is not determined; it runs between one to three years. The kuan-shih must help the t'ou-mu carry out his duties. For example, they are sent by him to some tent community to conduct inquiries in legal matters, such as to investigate a plunder. The tent communities do not have a special local council.

643 The chief duties of the t'ou-mu are the following: He regulates
701 the distribution of pastureland, and determines when the nomads
648 are to move from one pasture to another. The oatfields in the region of the winter pasturelands are the property of the t'ou-mu and are distributed by him. Rent, usually in the form of butter, must be paid him for the oatfields. He is the war lord of the tribe, and as such he can recruit eligible men for military service, /77/ likewise mounts and pack animals (horses and yaks). In case of war he must
643 put his soldiers at the disposal of the t'u-szu of Labrang. He and
651 his sub-chiefs must collect the taxes levied by the Chinese govern-
648 ment on the Fantzu, and hand them over to the district official of Hsia-ho. I could not ascertain whether the t'ou-mu withholds a certain sum for himself from the taxes he collects. The t'ou-mu must also put mounts and pack animals at the disposal of the Chinese district official when the latter or one of his subordinates travels
643 through the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu. The t'ou-mu has the
681 same prerogatives as an incarnation, in that he can demand a ninefold indemnity if he has been robbed. The t'ou-mu also has the privilege of donating the largest branch of a bush and a particularly long dart for the obo at the obo festival.

From what we have said about the position and authority of the t'ou-mu, it follows that he and his officials do not have a particularly great influence on the members of a tribe. We have also mentioned the fact that the individual tent communities do not
618 have regular chieftains. As far as I could ascertain, the clan does not have a great influence in the social and judicial life. There are no clan chieftains like the Chinese tsu-ch'ang.

575 On the other hand, certain societies have formed which are given the general name of ts'aowa (1) and whose chief function

1. Ekvall 4), page 69, briefly mentions these societies

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and calls them "thsuba." I give the pronunciation of my Chinese interpreter. 575

seems to be to provide legal protection. The ts'aowa of the Mewu nomads consists of four groups. There are 40 to 100 families or tents in one ts'aowa group. Each group chooses its own council. There are no rules about the length of time the council of a ts'aowa group is in office The t'ou-mu cannot influence the choice of such a ts'aowa council The individual ts'aowa groups are named /78/ after their councils. The power of each group within the tribe varies, and thus a certain family often strives to shift from a less influential group to a more influential one; they can do this by presenting the group council and several respected members of the group with a sheep and several chin of wine and inviting them to a meal. The group council, together with the entire group, is responsible for every crime committed by one of its members. It carries on negotiations with the council of another ts'aowa group if one of its members is obliged to pay a penalty to the members of another group for some crime, and the council must exact the penalty from the criminal and give it to the council of the other ts'aowa group. If a member of one ts'aowa group cannot pay the penalty demanded of him, the entire group guarantees to raise the fine. The condemned person must then gradually pay off the debt to the members of his group. The ts'aowa group can oust a criminal who they find is a burden to them, and the only thing left for him in that case is to join another group. I could not find out to what extent this is possible. Apparently there are never disagreements between the t'ou-mu and a ts'aowa group or its council about verdicts and penalties.

Legal matters. During my brief sojourn among the Mewu-Fantzu it was, of course, impossible for me, because of my ignorance of the language, to form a definite opinion about their character. This was all the more impossible because the Mewu-Fantzu, to begin with, have a grudging attitude toward a stranger. I had to spend considerable time talking to them on general topics before I could ask more detailed questions about their way of life, even though they knew my interpreter and did not dislike him. I should therefore like to insert here only a few statements of my interpreter who judged the Fantzu from the point of view of a simple, but intelligent Chinese /79/ trader, and who, of course, unwittingly made comparisons with the Chinese conditions of life under which he grew up. I did feel, however, that he made an effort to be neutral in his 624

124 judgment. In any case, he had had no particularly bad experiences during all the years of his contact with the Fantzu, although this happens very often to Chinese because they find it hard to suppress a certain conceit toward peoples of other cultures.

888 My interpreter described the Mewu-Fantzu as generally sincere,
181 courteous and hospitable. They do not get angry very easily; they
577 are faithful in friendship and are very willing to help each other, but being a Chinese, my interpreter was very scornful of their lack of piety toward their parents. It can happen that an adult son refuses to take his parents into his tent, which is why one sometimes sees old people begging at the temples or burial places. Even wealthy people sometimes treat their parents badly. The Fantzu do not often lie, nor do they incline to boasting; on the contrary, they try to belittle their property, and they put little value on "face." Even wealthy people wear dirty clothes, and sometimes even beg. They do not forget insults. In business the Fantzu are less reliable than the Chinese. They often do not keep their promises, and sometimes they forget to pay.

68 The most common crimes are: theft, plunder, the infliction of
754 bodily injuries, and - in the opinion of the Fantzu themselves - black magic.

671 Common law, not written down, is the law of the Fantzu. The
692 e'ou-mu, to whom all the more serious legal cases are presented, decides according to his judgment, usually with the approval of the heads of the ts'aowa groups.

685 According to my interpreter, the Fantzu do not have a tendency to theft, at any rate they do not rob each other. /80/ If they accept a stranger in their midst, (1) they do not steal from him or rob

1. as in the case of the author who was recommended to the Mewu Lamasery by the Labrang Lamasery.

him, especially not when he is a guest in a tent or house.

[123] Inconsistent though it seemed, my interpreter was always very
685 careful about guarding my belongings which were, as far as possible, stored in the tent in such a way that they could not be easily got at from the outside. An American missionary assured me that this precaution was justified, for he had lived a great deal among the Fantzu and had often been robbed. Nevertheless, my interpreter's insistence that the Fantzu do not tend to steal is only an apparent contradiction. Wherever primitive ideas of justice prevail, stealing from strangers is probably judged on a different moral basis than

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theft among members of one's own group. Even very primitive peo- 685
ples like the pygmies of the Congo jungle are extremely honest among one another, whereas as soon as they come into contact with farming Negroes, they quickly develop into positively virtuoso thieves. (2) There are probably easy transitions from this stage to

2. Gusinde 13).

the abuse of travelers by the extortionist tourist industry in civilized countries, which is not regarded as criminal any more than the robbing of strangers among primitives.

If a thief is caught and confesses his crime at once, his only punishment consists in his being forced to return or replace the stolen goods, provided the victim of the theft does not belong to the same ts'aowa group. If the thief will not confess his crime, he can be brought before the court of the t'ou-mu and he can be tortured into confession. In this case, too, the punishment is no more severe. If the victim who was robbed belongs to the same ts'aowa group, the thief must pay him back two or three times the value of the goods stolen, just as though he were /81/ a lama, whereas, as mentioned before, a t'ou-mu or an incarnation must be repaid ninefold. (1)

1. Cf. the same conditions among the Bedouins; Musil 14); or wergild in medieval Europe.

Outside their tribal territory all Fantzu tend to rob, especially 685
travelers. However, robberies no longer occur as much among the 519
Mewu-Fantzu as among tribes living farther in the interior of Tibet, where robberies are the order of the day. According to my interpreter, the Fantzu do not generally shoot or become violent in a sudden attack if one does not offer resistance. In that respect they would not act differently from Chinese robbers, although this is contrary to the experiences of many travelers. (2)

2. For example, a farmer from the province of Szechuan described such conduct of robbers to me as "polite" (k'e-ch'i), whereas it would be "impolite" in his opinion and contrary to good form if people who did not offer resistance were shot at (this does not mean warning shots), or if they were attacked in any other way.

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682 Quarrels leading to murder happen more often, according to my interpreter, among the Mewu-Fantzu than among the neighboring Chinese. The Fantzu above all tend to become brutal when they are drunk. Murder also occurs. The motive for murder is either jealousy or covetousness (murder attended with robbery). It also happens that a man shoots another because he honestly believes he has been harmed by him through magic.

682 If a murder has been committed, the family of the victim does
628 not relax its efforts until it has revenged itself on the murderer, if possible by killing him. Blood revenge is taken also if murders have been committed in a state of intoxication or if a person suspected of black magic has been murdered. If /82/ blood revenge is not taken, one loses respect. However, blood revenge rarely occurs in actual fact, for the murderer usually flees beyond the borders of the tribal territory, seeking refuge with some other tribe. If the murderer is caught before the victim's family was able to carry out blood revenge, he is first of all soundly thrashed and held captive until he can pay a penalty of 80 yaks. Thereupon he is banished from the tribal territory for four years. There is no death penalty inflicted except by the clan of the blood avengers. The property of the murderer is seized if he was captured or if he escaped. Blood revenge is not considered murder and is not punished. The custom of blood revenge among the Mewu-Fantzu is thus already very much mitigated. It seems to be largely replaced by an indemnity in the form of yaks. For example, if a member of a ts'aowa group kills a member of another group, the two ts'aowa chieftains decide on the indemnity, which is usually a penalty of 80 yaks, at least 40 of which must be first-class, the rest can be less good. If the relatives of the murderer cannot meet the payment in full, the entire ts'aowa group to which the murderer belongs must make up the rest.

421 Foremost among the property rights of the nomads is, of course,
233 the question of the right to pasturelands. The pastureland is divided among the individual tent communities by the t'ou-mu. The land used for planting oats near the winter pastures is divided among the individual families. There is enough land for planting oats, and everyone can cultivate as much as he needs for his stock. The t'ou-mu divides the various families into tent communities. The lamaseries have their own pastures for yaks; they do not raise sheep. The boundaries of the pasturelands of individual tent communities must be respected just as strictly as those of the entire

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tribe. There /83/ are also fixed rules about the use of pastures during the various seasons (first and second summer pasture and winter pasture). The tent communities do not quarrel about pasture-lands. Violating regulations with regard to pastureland is punished by the t'ou-mu with a fine which must be paid in butter. For every yak that breaks out beyond the boundaries of the pasture its owner must pay two chin of butter. 421 233

There seems to be no particular hunting rights, but the t'ou-mu has the authority to forbid hunting under certain circumstances. Thus, for example, during my stay among the Mewu-Fantzu, the shooting of groundhogs was forbidden for definite reasons. In such cases hunting rights are not granted even for money. If a person is caught violating the rules, he is first beaten and then required to pay a fine. 421 224

There are no sales transactions involving legal contracts. Stock is sold by the head. The Fantzu are very adroit traders; there are usually no disputes in business deals. 432

Judicial authority is only theoretically in the hands of the Chinese district administration; in practice it is left to the Fantzu themselves. The Chinese court does not prosecute punishable actions of the Fantzu. Even when a Fantzu has wronged a Chinese, he is not prosecuted directly by a Chinese court, but at the proposal of the district official by the t'ou-mu who, as we have said above, is the superior judge. It is only when very influential Chinese have been robbed that the Chinese authorities send out a military posse. The Chinese for their part do not dare harm the Fantzu, for fear of their revenge. They are glad when the Fantzu leave them alone. Two years ago (1934) Chinese soldiers killed seven or eight Fantzu, whereupon the t'ou-mu immediately sent out his warriors to pursue the Chinese. However, there was no incident because a Mohammedan /84/ officer acted as mediator. A fine of $100 was demanded for each man slain. The incident shows that the Mohammedan played a neutral, respected role between Fantzu and Chinese. 692 563

The t'ou-mu can prosecute a crime only if it takes place within the territory of his tribe. If the criminal escapes into another territory, he can pursue him only as far as the border. 692

The councils of the ts'aowa groups enjoy about the same authority as the t'ou-mu. Their task is a little more arduous since in judicial cases and the pursuit of a criminal, they are appealed to first. The ts'aowa council, however, is required to ask the t'ou-mu for permission to pursue a criminal. As a rule t'ou-mu and ts'aowa work together in such cases.

692 In legal disputes the t'ou-mu chooses a body of judges consisting of himself, the councils of the ts'aowa groups, the kuan-shih of the t'ou-mu or other older men who are known to be good speakers and fair in their judgment. The number of judges varies according to
695 the importance of the case. The choice of venue depends on the circumstances; usually the trial is held in a temple or a village of the sedentary Fantzu. Witnesses are examined, much as in a Chinese court. The parties must take the oath of telling the truth in front of a Buddha image. If the truth cannot be ascertained from witnesses, various methods of divine judgment are used. In less serious cases a box is produced in which there is a white stone and a black stone. The person who draws the white stone wins. In more serious cases one of two forms of divine judgment is used: the two parties must either touch a red-hot ax with their hands or they must dip their hands into boiling rape oil. The one whose hand is not burned is innocent. The boiling-oil test is most often used.

681 If an accused will not confess, /85/ he is tortured. There are nine different methods of torture: 1. a person is whipped on the back with a leather whip; 2. a person's hands are tied behind his back with a leather strap, whereupon he is suspended from a post by his hands; 3. both wrists are bound with a rope made of yak hair, whereupon eight men, four on either side pull the rope tight; 4. the body is stretched out at the four extremities and is suspended in the air; in this position the accused is lashed on the back with a whip; 5. back and legs are beaten with willow withes; 6. whipping with a leather whip. If after the sixth form of punishment the accused does not confess, he is acquitted and is rewarded with a horse. The third form of torture is the most dreaded. Three additional forms occur under certain circumstances: 7. the legs of the accused are tied together with a rope and he is dragged along the ground. The 8th and 9th methods of torture consist of whip lashes. The t'ou-mu orders the torture to take place after having consulted with the court. He can appoint anyone he likes to inflict the torture.

As we have said, there is no capital punishment, with the exception of blood revenge. There is also no punishment of imprisonment, but the t'ou-mu can imprison a criminal until the trial has taken place. Infractions of any kind are avenged by the payment of penalties in money, butter, sheep or yaks. If a convicted person cannot pay the penalty imposed upon him, the t'ou-mu has him taken into custody and soundly thrashed. The penalty which the condemned person cannot pay must be made

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good by the ts'aowa group, as we have already mentioned, and the 681
accused must gradually pay off his debt to the group. The most severe punishment is probably expulsion from the ts'aowa group, which makes a man homeless.

Witnesses are not tortured. They are not /86/ examined in pub- 685
lic but in a separate room, so that they cannot be seen by the accused and thus be exposed to his revenge.

The t'ou-mu also has jurisdiction over members of another tribe 692
whom he can punish. The punishment is not, however, always recognized by the tribe to whom the convicted person belongs. During my stay among the Mewu-Fantzu, for example, the t'ou-mu held a lama prisoner for stealing a gun. The lama belonged to the He-tso Lamasery outside Mewu territory. He had ordered the lama whipped. For this reason no male Mewu-Fantzu ventured into the region of He-tso, since he would have been in danger of being captured.

Disputes between inhabitants of various tents in the same tent 578
community are settled by the t'ou-mu or one of his kuan-shih; like- 721
wise disputes between various tent communities. In such cases violence is seldom resorted to. Disputes between the tent Fantzu and the sedentary Fantzu of the Mewu tribe are very rare. They, too, are settled by the t'ou-mu. On the other hand, there are often quarrels between Fantzu of different tribes, sometimes leading to war.

In former times wars were frequent. But the Mewu-Fantzu fought 701
their last war about 30 years ago, that is, during imperial times. 721
On the other hand, a war was fought just a few years ago, about 100 li to the southwest. It lasted three years and ended only when the ruling feudal lord of Labrang, the "Huang-szu-ling" seized control. If a state of war arises the Huang-szu-ling calls his subordinate t'ou-mu to war. This happened, for example, during my stay when the region between T'ao-chou and Ho-chou, to which the territory of the Mewu-Fantzu and the lamaseries of Labrang and He-tso belong, was endangered by the "long march" of Mao Tse-tung's Communist Army to Shensi. The t'ou-mu recruit soldiers. Every tent must furnish at least one soldier, /87/ sometimes as many as two or three. Each man must bring his own weapons, ammunition and horses, just as in ancient times in the wars of the nomadic peoples, such as the Ch'i-tan and the Mongols. Families who cannot furnish a soldier must give weapons and guns, ammunition and a horse for those who are too poor to furnish their own equipment. The t'ou-mu decides how dangerous the situation is and how many recruits are to be called out.

563 The Mewu-Fantzu are already to a certain extent dependent on the Chinese, since they live relatively near them. This dependence is, however, still a rather indirect one, and is expressed through the secular Fantzu ruler of Labrang, the "Huang-szu-ling."

221 Wars between Fantzu and Chinese no longer occur, since the
563 Fantzu respect the superior military might of the Chinese. But it
648 often happens that Chinese are robbed by Fantzu. Such cases are, as a rule, brought before the court of the Huang-szu-ling who, according to my interpreter, wherever possible sides with the Fantzu. He arranges the payment of damages. The Fantzu are, however, not too friendly with the Chinese, first of all because they feel oppressed by the taxes which the Chinese government imposes on them, and, secondly, because the Chinese are pushing into their territory as colonists. However, the latter reason affects only the sedentary Fantzu to any practical extent.

563 The Fantzu have a different and closer relationship with the Chinese Mohammedans who play a special part in the political and social life of the country. (1) In language and material culture

1. Ekvall describes in detail the relationship between the Fantzu - nomadic and sedentary - and the Chinese and Mohammedans.

these Mohammedans do not differ from actual Chinese, but the latter regard them /88/ more or less as aliens. They are largely descendants of Turkish tribes, who in the course of time settled in Kansu and intermarried with the Chinese. In external appearance (they are a Turanian race rather than Sinic) (2) as well as in

2. Terms according to von Eickstedt 15).

character, they are often very different from the Chinese. The Mohammedans live in Kansu as farmers, merchants and innkeepers. As traders they have penetrated far into Fantzu territory and constitute the chief element of the population in the market towns which have arisen in the vicinity of the large lamaseries. If Mohammedans are robbed by Fantzu they are much more apt to follow their natural war-like bent and fight than are the Chinese. Thus Fantzu raids are sometimes followed by minor avenging expeditions on the part of the Mohammedans. Eleven years ago (about 1925) there was the last major warlike entanglement between Mohammedans
600 and Fantzu. The relationship of the Mohammedans to the Chinese

is much more tense. Until very recently there were often bloody 000 Mohammedan uprisings against the Chinese government. The last of these took place only eight years ago (about 1928). In such times of unrest when the power of Chinese officials is not very far-reaching, there is a general feeling of great insecurity. The Fantzu often take this opportunity to plunder the Chinese. Nevertheless, the Chinese who fled into the territory of the Fantzu during the last uprising were well treated by them. Since then, however, the favorable relationship between Fantzu and Chinese has deteriorated more and more (for the above-mentioned reasons), so that in 1936 my interpreter doubted whether the Fantzu would assist the Chinese in a Mohammedan uprising.

Key to diagrams on following page:

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w - wall, d - tent roof, r - smoke vent, f - fireplace, ew - wall in front of fireplace, e - entrance, a - family altar, b - fuel, pfl - stakes to fasten down tent roof, p - supports for the tent roof.

Mewu

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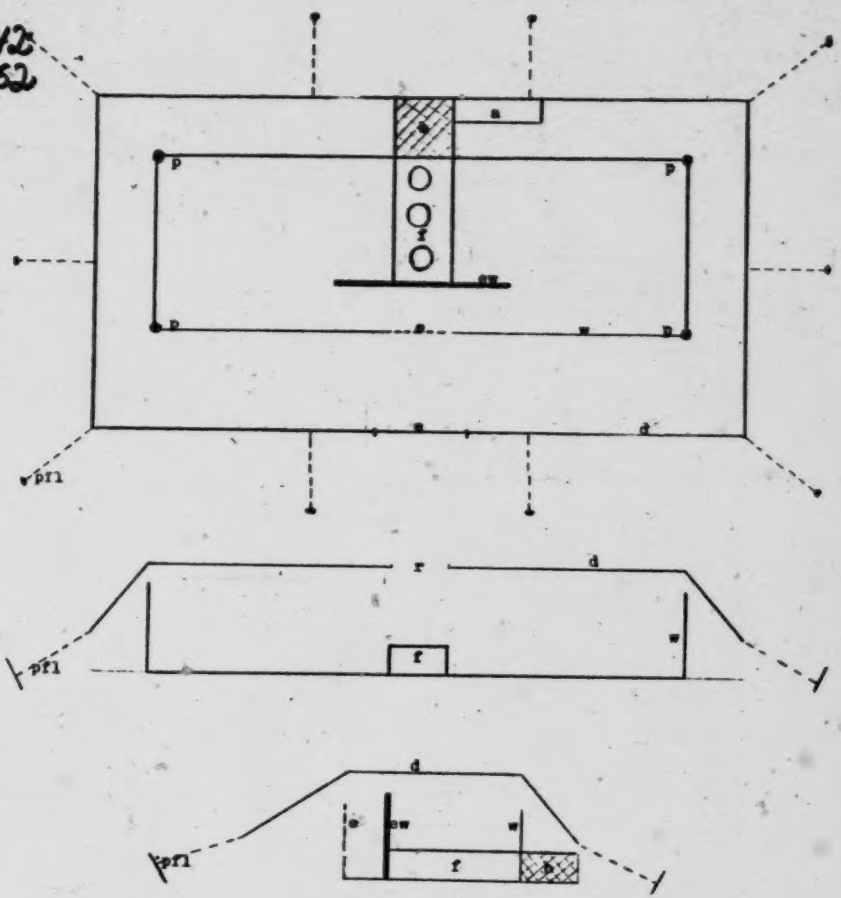

w = Wand, d = Zeltdach, r = Rauchabzug, f = Feuerstelle, ew = Wand vor der Feuerstelle, e = Eingang, a = Hausaltar, b = Brennmaterial, pfl = Pflöcke zur Befestigung des Zeltdaches, p = Stützpfähle für das Zeltdach.

[For an English translation of the caption, see p. 70]

6: Stübel--72 E-5 (1936) 1954 AE3 Sino-Tibetan Border Peoples AE3
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